

This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

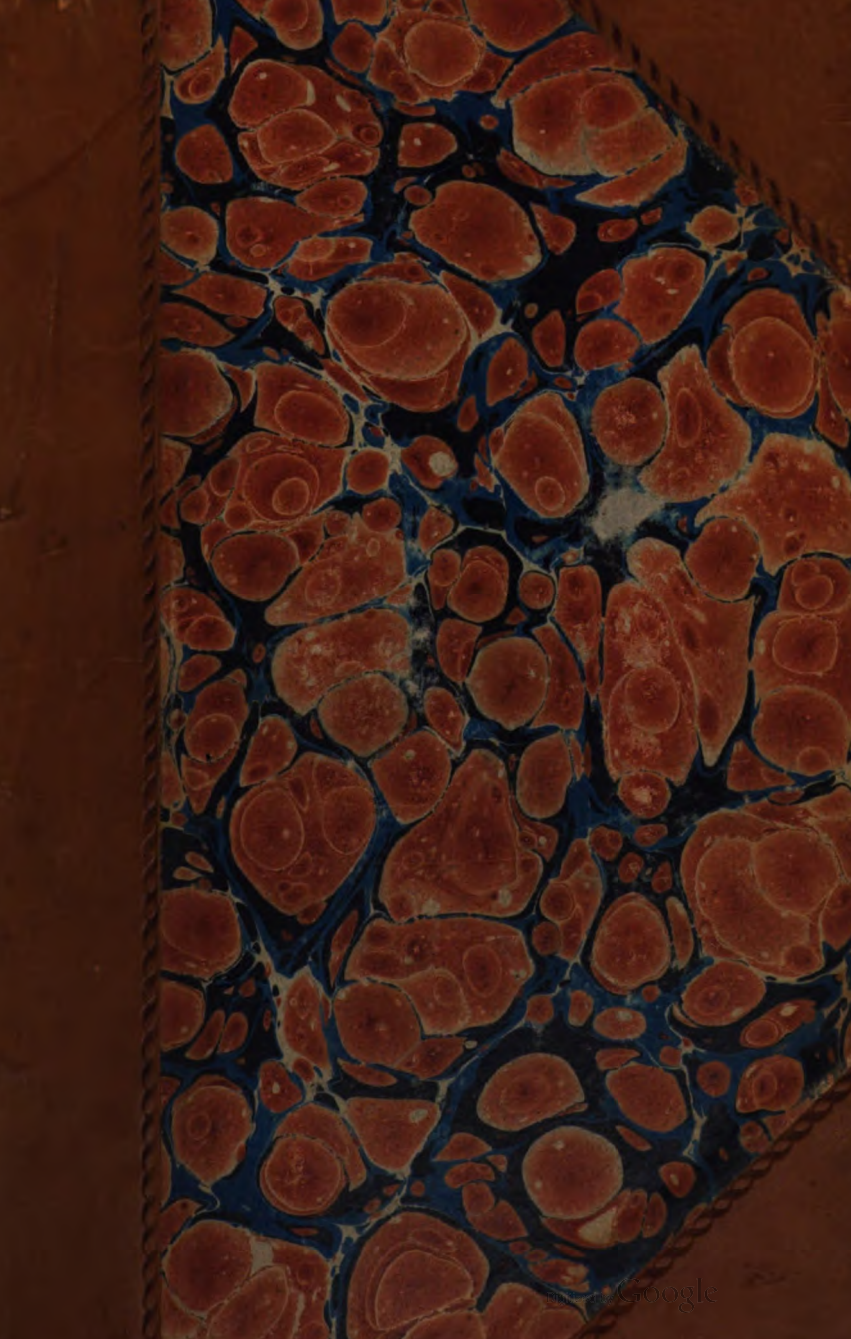
+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

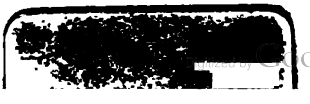
+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`

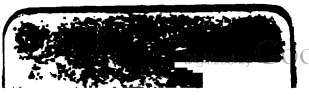

Digitized by Google

38.
382.



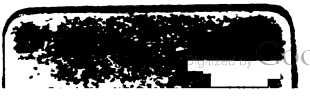
Digitized by Google

38.
382.



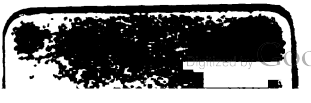
Digitized by Google

38.
382.



Digitized by Google

38.
382.



Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

(only 50 copies printed.
Bohn's edit of Lowe.)

Digitized by Google

FAUST,

A TRAGEDY, IN TWO PARTS.

BY

GÖTHE.

RENDERED INTO ENGLISH VERSE.

VOL. I.

LONDON:
PRINTED BY ARTHUR TAYLOR,
COLEMAN STREET.

1838.

382.

Digitized by Google



Digitized by Google

INTRODUCTORY TO THE TRANSLATION.

For the profound work Göthe hath created
An English dress I fashion and fit on;
And all, who will, may here find plainly stated
My notion of HIS notions—right or wrong;
And all who will not, or as worthless rate it,
Have but to skip these pages, and pass on
To the scenes themselves of that surpassing Play
By the one consummate artist of his day.

Man's triune nature shadowed forth one sees
In Gretchen, Faust, and Mephistopheles:
The INTELLECTUAL, to the Gods that links him;
The SENSUAL, that 'midst dust and demons sinks him;
The MORAL, blending purity and love,
Guileless, unselfish, with forgiveness teeming,
Beautifying, sanctifying, all-redeeming,
Drawing his spirit to the realms above.
A theme that sweeps within its daring grasp
The true and false, the noble and the base;
The petty, restless as the fretful wasp,
Or torpid as the tortoise in its case;
And they, whose great hearts earth and heaven would clasp,
And thy realms, Fancy, in their wide embrace.

Digitized by Google

The Present's vivid motley hues;
The gray receding Past;
The transient things, hight news;
The Enduring, that nail fast
Fame's colours to the mast.
The harmonious,
The incongruous;
The graceful, the grotesque;
The plain, the picturesque;
The gorgeous, the squalid;
The soothing, the horrid;
Youth and age, disease and health;
Shame and honour, want and wealth;
Hope, faith, charity, energy, peace, and gladness;
Fear, scepticism, hate, apathy, strife, and sadness;
Reason, devotion, love, blasphemy, lust, and madness.
And glimpses of heaven, and deity;
And the wondrous shapes of phantasy;
And those that we deem reality;
And the dreams of what may never be;
The ever-shifting tapestry,
Wrought in the brain's, or in nature's loom;
And the abyss, whence issue
Materials for each tissue,
And where, at length, all find a tomb.

Faust is the medium through which the bard
Bids us the human intellect regard:
Its hopes and fears, its perils and reward;
Its strength and weakness; its delights and pains;
Its heavenward yearnings, and its sensual chains,
As on it stumbles over earthly plains,
'Twixt hellish compacts and immortal trust,
Goaded by curiosity or lust,
Maddening with pleasure, sickening with disgust.

Digitized by Google

For ever restless and dissatisfied,
Ever tormented with an aching void,
Ever longing for the far off and untried;
Yet gazing on the beautiful around—
On stately forests, on the flower-pranked ground—
On all that ocean's mystic zone doth bound;
And the magnificence beyond, that lies
'Midst the dread concave of the star-thronged skies,
With an immortal spirit's sympathies.

Mephisto is that Puck-like part
Of evil, that we ne'er can sever
From the most healthy human heart—
That cleaves to flesh, and will for ever—
That steeps in poison Eros' dart,
And sneers at every high endeavour.
The most malicious, restless devil
Is he, of all the sons of evil;
Nor the least plausible and civil.
He makes, on earth, a greater stir
Than even his chieftain Lucifer.
And yet, of all denying spirits,
He is the demon whose demerits
Are least offensive in the eye
Of Heaven—and this the reason why:
To be sneered at, rouses human pride,
And makes man self-dissatisfied,
And spurs, and puts him on his mettle
To cross-examine, and to settle
What should be cherished—what be thrown,
As worthless, to oblivion.
Ever, when not base passion's tool,
He sighs for the true and beautiful;
Yet, being by nature far too prone

Digitized by Google

To slumber, and 'leave well alone,'
Whatever serves him as a flapper,
And makes him more alert and dapper,
Furthers, perforce, the real ends
To which creative power tends.
Therefore, despite his schemes and jokes,
Like other over-clever folks,
Mephisto finds his projects beached,
And himself, at the upshot, over-reached.
How?—'midst a thousand shrewd supposes,
Would any worldling guess?—not one:
Why, he gets pelted off with roses;
Io triumphe! shout, well done!

And in thee, lovely GRETCHEN, in thee—
The confiding, the gentle, the pure—
All the heart's best affections we see;
All that fits for, and makes heaven sure.
Hope, that still for the beautiful sighs,
Though 'midst dungeons and squalidness cast;
That true Faith, which on goodness relies,
Nor doubts of its conquering at last;
Love, that scorneth conventional bonds—
That is stronger than sin, or the grave—
That may madden, but never desponds,
And, though trampled on, pardons and saves:
And Innocence, maiden, was thine,
And its type the bard meant thee to be,
For thy heart was untainted by crime,
Till, from earth and its misery, set free.
Thy delusion was guileless—was good,
Till consciousness stripped its disguise,
Then awakened, but still unsubdued,
Thy spirit escaped to the skies.

Digitized by Google

'To the pure in heart, all things are pure:'
And thou, to the bright world above
Didst make thy own calling secure,
And successfully plead for thy love.

And shadowed forth is that great mystery, too,
Matter's and Spirit's union: which we see,
Far as the eye or mind may penetrate, through
Sentient, insentient—through all things that be.
From the same source—the infinite and free—
Springing; again dissolving in that source;
The real and ideal, inseparably,
Prisoned in finite forms, pursue their course,
Blent, even as two fluids blend through chemic force.
Not thus, material science doth opine,
Whose strength, like that of Antæus, is of earth,
Whose empire, over the mere forms that shrine
Vitality and spirit. What though, forth
On daring wing, she sweep through depths sublime
Of space; or to her planet's centre-mine;
Or, diving, gaze on the mysteries of ocean:
Strangely unconscious of this truth divine,
Of the absolute, in sooth, she gets no notion,
Nor of the source of genius, beauty, and devotion;
Of that, without which she herself were nought,
Though her Wagnerian votaries oft have sought—
Alas, for self-conceit's impervious screen!—
To prove its influence but a waking dream;
Of that, without whose brightening atmosphere
All nature would seem desolate and drear;
Of that, without whose metaphysic aid,
Man's crowning glories vainly were essayed—
The master-works of poesy and art:
At best imperfect, for it can impart

Digitized by Google

Its aid but through the influence of what
Is fleeting, limited, inadequate.
Did ever poet, struggling to give vent
To high conception, reach the height he meant?
Did ever harmonist make audible
Such music as within himself doth dwell?
Did ever painter, by his happiest touch,
Dash on the canvas, and make visible, such
Beauty as he hath dreamed? or sculptor striven,
With chisel in the marble chaos driven,
Successfully, to seize the forms he sought?
Yet, the dreams of patient and of daring thought,
In such material must, perforce, be wrought
Through mere mechanic drudgery and skill.
Hence, it hath ever been, and ever will
Be found, that the gifted minds, which are endowed
With that *higher instinct*, unfelt by the crowd,
Whatever daring heights they may attain
Never repose self-satisfied and vain;
Onward they press, from Alp to soaring Alp,
And, standing breathless on the highest scalp,
Are goaded still, by insatiate desire,
To reach some ether-shrouded peak that beacons higher.
Nor is this alone of the *intellectual* true:
It obtains in the *moral*, and the *sensual*, too.
There are, whom the meaner instinct but obey;
Whom the mere conventional and finite sway;
Whom the literal dread of human canons bind;
Whose views to this earth—this being—are confined;
Or if, as oft, they've faith in a future state,
'Tis of their own merely a duplicate.
And there are those, beyond the settled rules
Of vice and virtue set forth in the schools,
Beyond the meagre letter of the law,

Digitized by Google

That doth the unthinking multitude o'erawe;
Natures superior to the purblind throng,
In good or evil.
Some, despite of wrong,
Of baffled hopes, of base ingratitude,
Still sympathize, hope, pardon, and love on;
Still have faith in, and promote, the fair and good:
Though here, like the dove, they have not where t'abide,
Nor shall, till the waves of sensual strife subside.
And some plot evil deeds, with long-reached aim,
That the malice of the Devil himself would shame.
But evil deeds, and sensual, all have end,
Towards which their every onward step doth tend.
Time daily lessens the domains of evil,
And may, for aught one knows, convert the Devil;
For he, being with that higher instinct imbued,
Which grasps, through every vicissitude,
At what's enduring, may have prerogative
His own demoniac efforts to survive:
When the BECOMING—living—working ever—
(That now, in realms serene of perfect love,
The perfected embraces) shall deliver
All Being from strife, and dissonance remove.
In the last notion, some may not agree;
But none the former truth can fail to see.
Whate'er through the meaner instinct could be won,
Faust, by research and toil, had overcome;
Yet, restless and dissatisfied, when all
Had been attained that is thus attainable,
And stopt by the unseen fence on every side,
He is driven to the verge of suicide.
Whilst, conscious of that lower impulse only,
Wagner plods on, laboriously and lonely;
Pleased with himself, pleased with his sordid gains,

Digitized by Google

Crowing o'er every earth-worm he attains.
One seeks to blend with the spirit that blendeth all;
One, to isolate and exalt the individual.
  Compare the petty schemes that Martha please,
With the daring ones of Mephistopheles.
  The scene 'twixt Bess and Gretchen, at the well,
Proclaims the same view, clearly as a bell;
And still more clearly, more profoundly still,
That wherein Faust the soldier's blood doth spill;
Nor in these alone, but through all, the distinction's shown,
Though I need not hold my rushlight to the sun.
  Not that the ideal's influence is confined
Merely to minds of the superior kind,
Nor even restricted to the human mind.
The poet seeks, throughout the work, to unfold
How it blends with the real in all that we behold;
Hence, as either power becomes most prevalent,
The various scenes take their prevailing bent;
None so gross as wholly to exclude the ideal—
So etherialized as to show no trace of the real.

  But, in the third place: shadowed forth we see
The phases of man's social history;
And in the Absoluts, recorded there,
The identity of both is made most clear;
Resulting in event, in action seen,
We find them issue from a common spring.
  The unidea'd wastes of common life,
Its toils, cares, prejudices, joys, and strife;
The power and pomp and circumstance and show,
That wealth or fortune or ambition throw
Around their minions, for a while, below;
The shock of armies on the battle-plain;
The toils of intellect, to extend its reign;

Digitized by Google

Wasting or scorning, now, the loveliest scenes
Where, with spontaneous wealth, the glad earth teems;
And now, forestalling Nature's calm decrees,
To win some sterile shore from wasting seas;
Or, Ahab-like, 'midst unenjoyed domains,
Unblest, unless some petty nook it gains—
The poor man's humble, but sufficing, all,
Even whilst the curtain on life's closing scene doth fall.
Are those, of human history, a part?
What the imagination or the heart
Creates, or trusts in, though material guise
It hath none, are as real as those realities.
Who knows not, or neglects, their unseen reign,
Whether events be chronicle or sway,
Will find his energies and labours vain,
Baseless, and passing with himself away.
Thus blinded, deem not thou hast prerogative,
Oh, son of man, to make the dry bones live:
Together thou mayst bring them, bone by bone,
Mayst spread the sinews and the flesh thereon,
But half the prophet's power is wanting still,
The living spirit wherewithal to fill.
Thus blind, proud chief, thy doings can but know
The fate of chronicles recording so.
Though wielding, as none ever did before,
Material energies, and sensual power,
So as even to overcome and trample down
Prejudice, custom, awe of established sway,—
Armed phantoms starting up on all sides round
To scare, like the empty armour in our play,—
Yet, wanting this, what hath Napoleon won?
And what of all his doings hath become?
Those changeful phantasms, hight reality,
In every era of recorded time,

Digitized by Google

If in thronged city or lone wild he be,
Man hath recognized, as instinct with spirit divine,
That, to kindred spirit in himself, appeals.
Hence—as the scenes in which he acts and feels,
Various—'midst child-like wonder, fear, and glee,
Now sense prevailing, and now phantasy,
All natural rites and worship take their rise,
And claim his homage and his sympathies;
As a pervading principle, first known,
Active in every form as in his own.
In the veined foliage and the painted flower,
Are form and hue and fragrance all we see?
And recognize we no instinctive power,
That unfolds the bud, uplifts the stately tree?
Dwells there no spirit in the mighty deep,
To rouse its billows, or to bid them sleep?
None 'midst the gathering storm-cloud's tented gloom,
To launch the red bolt from its vapoury womb?
None, on those viewless coursers of the air,
That, now, scarce stir the mountain-pines' dusk hair,
Now, from the rock, its grasping spurs uptear?
Gaze we on heaven's proud height, and see no spirit there?
Thence to collective spirit: Chloris, Pan,
Proteus, or, through nature's Dædal plan,
One universal spirit,—whom men proclaim,
From various attributes, by various name:
'For that, he's the self-created, all-creating one,
'Whose vocation, from eternity, goes on;
'For that, he creates—hath created from of yore—
'Faith, confidence, love, activity, and power.
'But, 'midst the countless exponents of his presence,
'Inscrutable, for aye, abides his essence.
'Far as the ear grasps sound, the eye doth view,
'Thou find'st but the known, and liken'st him thereto:

Digitized by Google

'Yet, the fire-flight of thy spirit's highest mood,
'Even thus, hath enough of the similitude;
'It draws thee onward 'midst serenest day;
'Where'er thou wanderest, it adorns thy way;
'Thou count'st not time, it is as nought to thee,
'Thy every step is in immensity.
'What were a god, that only should control,
'And, with his finger, move the circling whole,
'From without? Beseems, from within, the creator
'To move the universe; himself in nature,
'And nature in himself, to cherish; so
'That, what lives and moves and is in him, doth know
'No want of his power, none of his spirit's glow;
'That quickening power pervades all things that be;
'Is in every sphere that glides, rejoicingly,
'Through the pure hyaline's all-circling sea;
'It now to night, and now to day, doth restore
'This earth-ball, pulsing through its inmost core;
'When, 'midst the infinite, each brother-star
'Doth now approximate, and now fly afar,
'As through ether, myriad-vaulted, on they glide,
'In intersecting paths of power and pride,
'How, forth from all, that joyous life-glow's streaming,
'Alike in the smallest as the largest teeming;
'And the orbits, and the orbs that in them move,
'Eternally repose in the God of Love.'

So speaks the bard; so doth all nature speak;
Yet, still, external deity men seek—
As did his chosen, spite of that decree
Which bade no likeness of himself to be—
From common minds, unto superior mind
Soaring, beyond the herd of its own kind,
And claiming worship: or else, taking rise

Digitized by Google

In the wish more perfectly to sympathize,
And, through real forms, to approximate more near
To what is loved, or held in reverent fear.
On such foundation, phantasy, caprice,
Guile, vanity, have raised, and, till time shall cease,
Will raise and overthrow man's varying creeds,
And all the phantoms superstition breeds.
Nor hath science rarely deigned to assume such guise,
To shroud her esoteric mysteries.
  Ever in sympathy with mighty Nature's
Are their prevailing characters and features;
Sombre or gay, magnificent or mean,
Their aspect takes the aspect of the scene;
The sky-roofed temple amidst which it reigns,
Thunder where'er it may, each oracle proclaims,
Even when, as pilgrims from a distant clime,
They mould themselves to some adopted shrine.
Hence, all the various mythologies;
Hence enchantment, divination, sorceries,
Witchcraft;—but there exists a single word
That in its scope embraceth the whole herd:
MAGIC! dread spell-word, binding in its zone
All unearthly phant'sies that the earth-born own;
Blending all mystic records into one;
Alike, if demoniacal or divine,
If from celestial sources or profane,
From Greece, Arabia, or Palestine,
Indian, Egyptian, or Chaldean plain.
Vast, three-fold realm of spirits, obedient still,
Through their great magnet FAITH, to mortal will!
By which the patriarchs and prophets old,
Favoured of heaven, its purposes foretold;
And oft, on earthly plains, held colloquy
With the celestial spirits of the sky;

Digitized by Google

By which the sage who, with enlightened eyes,
Profoundly looked through Nature's mysteries,
The Genii of Earth, Ether, Flood, and Flame
Summoned—that ever, at his bidding, came;
By which, with daring impious delight,
The bad called demons from their realm of night,
Pawning the immortal soul to misery there
For the power of spreading misery round them here.
Wild notion! sire of a wild progeny!
What countless monsters trace their source to thee.
From Endor's hag, that bade the prophet rise,
To those who still ride broom-steeds through the skies;
Or those enchanters, who drew down weird light
From the silver-shafted goddess of the night,
O'er the Ægean billows, wildly heaving,
Serenest beauty with rude uproar weaving,
Where extends the treacherous Thessalian shore,
To the Pixies, that still haunt my own wild moor.
  Amidst the darkness of the middle ages,
Magic shone forth, the sole light of their sages;
And threw its brilliant and unearthly glance
O'er every page of chivalrous romance;
And, of degraded serf and brutal chief,
Gave the drear chronicle its sole relief.
And still it shines with undimmed power, at least
O'er man's first dwelling-place, the glowing East.
Being thus widely spread, thus deeply rooted,
In strict accordance with historic truth,
Its place in the drama may not be disputed;
Where it serves a minor purpose too, in sooth:
To bind the whole with dramatic unity,
In narrower compass than would else be needed;
So that the wand, the mantle, and the key
Save useless details, which might else be pleaded

Digitized by Google

As essential to their probability;
But the legal purposes are not exceeded,
Which keep us safe within the canons three.
(Here, perhaps, I'd best slide in the reason, why
I cumber with my own rhymes this translation:
Namely, that 'tis the shortest way, which I
Could devise, to give such fitting explanation
As seemed advisable, by way of chorus;
And to save preface, notes, concordances,
Wherewith 'tis much the custom now to bore us,
Which, oftener than the worth, the bulk enhances.)
Classic traditions of earth's joyous prime,
Peopling her fairest haunts, and serenest ocean,
With beings, that still, with rapturous emotion,
Thrill the heart, as they gleam thro' the softening veil of time,
Blent with strange traces of such forms as the slime
Shrouding an older world, long closely hid,
Till delving science, lifting up the lid
Of many a monster's coffin, made men stare
To find what beings their precursors were;
And such rude sorceries as northern minds
Have 'gendered, 'midst the strife of ruder climes,
With daring vigour are pourtrayed, to show
The ideal's influence over things below.
Wild and incongruous needs must be the display,
When the fancy and senses hold high holiday,
Or revelling on the sovran Brocken's steep,
Or gathering, the Ægean's ocean-feast to keep.
Nor unforgot, that portion of the lore,
Which, the regions of the elemental four,
Peopled with hosts of beautiful beings, blent
From the purest parts of each pure element,
Numerous as gnat-swarms on a summer eve,
That in the woodlands mystic dances weave;

Digitized by Google

Visible ever, unto Adam's eyes,
Ere banished from his native Paradise;
And which the gifted adept yet beholds,
Whom philosophy amongst her sons enrols,
Whose sight her true elixir purifies;
Of each element, who knoweth to confine
The fitting portion in the crystal shrine,
That the sun's rays may purge it and sublime;
The which inhaled, by sympathy's great law,
As magnets the trembling needle, he may draw
Those subtle beings forth. From the skyey dome
Then, winged sylphs will at his bidding come:
From the sun's cloud-tent in the gorgeous west,
Along the burnished billows golden path;
From the roseate east, ere scarce the morning hath
Tipped the hills with light; to his noontide bower,
Adown the slant rays of the glistening screen,
Formed by the mist-folds of the summer shower,
That 'twixt him and the old woods intervene.
Or, to some lonely streamlet doth he his,
To its own music, waltzing gracefully
With the gay beams that kiss its eddying tides
In trembling rapture, as it onward glides:
Undines, to greet him, rise. Or, where the pine
Casts anchor, and o'erhangs some deep ravine,
Up through earth's veins, from central caverns, come,
With glad obedience, many a gem-crowned gnome.
And the reluctant salamanders come,
To do his bidding, from their glowing home.
Ah, beings of surpassing loveliness,
Beyond man's feeble language to express!
And yet not spirit, though ye are so pure
That lengthened ages ye may well endure.
Of minds yet lovelier: folly ye despise,

Digitized by Google

Science ye love; ye are docile to the wise;
Well may ye claim their aid and sympathies!
Well may ye sigh for fellowships, that give,
Of immortality, the high prerogative!
Well may ye dread, enjoying as ye are,
To dissolve, and be as though ye never were!
At aught of this to sneer, are we inclined?
They are portions of the history of mind.
Wer't otherwise, we had better, first, make sure
That, of the earth's true elements, we know more
Than those who held them to consist of four;
And settle all the mystic doubt, that breeds
Such disputation, in more recent creeds;
And commune in spirit, with the spirit that breathes
In the marble forms antiquity bequeaths;
And gaze on Edom's rock-scooped palaces,
Or on the waste where Tadmor's columns rise—
Ere ancient creeds and doings we despise.

But see, from out the dread abyss, arise—
Where dwell the bygones, unexistent now—
She who became the Dardan shepherd's prize,
Whose charms, in a rude age, made the rudest bow,
Who won the world's enduring sympathies,
Despite her frailties and her broken vow.
As in a dream, 'midst Pelop's realm, we stand,
The mists of time roll back on either hand,
And lo, surrounded by fair nymphs, their queen,
Gliding, with regal state, majestic and serene.
Through the gray phantasm of antiquity,
And through the adventurous one of chivalry,
Down to the present's motley good and crime,
That will form the phantasm of some future time.
Ah, beauty!—the soul's idol—still glide on

Digitized by Google

In eternal youth, and make all earth thine own.
When other forty centuries shall have rolled
Over the glowing life we now behold,
And from its embers history lights her link,
Will she show a finer phantasm, dare we think?
Man zig-zags fearfully, one must needs confess;
Still, I am of those dreamers who say, yes:
No higher art, no fairer scene, may be,
Nor more refined joy, nor more gifted mind,
Than what hath been of yore—than some that be—
But such blessings may be, will be, less confined.

Three leading objects of the work being shown,
Three leading truths let's rest a moment on,
That, amongst others, may be drawn therefrom:
First, that excitement is the intellect's life—
It subsists but in activity and strife.
As history proves man doth, Faust stumbles on,
Now and then right, far oftener in the wrong;
Yet still advancing—still not yielding up
His mental vigour to the Circean cup
Of earth-born joy, nor to the moment saying,
'Tarry, oh tarry! for thou art so fair;'
But those instinctive impulses obeying
That tend to fit him for a nobler sphere.
And next, that by his own unaided might
Man may not climb to that etherial height
For which the pure heart ever yearns: aspiring,
Magnificent, oft foiled, but never tiring,
Are the efforts of the intellect; yet they
Are exerted upon finite forms of clay,
So, with the finite, needs must pass away.
And last, that the pure affections of the heart,
Unsensual and divine in their very nature,

Digitized by Google

Have power to cheer us when all else depart;
That they alone—whatever strange defeature
Selfish malevolence, or sin, may write
On the forms that shrine them here—escape the blight
Which cankers and consumes all that mankind
Doth toil for, or doth glory in, besides;
In them alone is all true beauty shrined;
Beauty, the sole thing that Time's power derides;
That, in itself, the germ of eternity bears;
The which, developed in more perfect spheres,
Redeems, and sanctifies, and draws within
Its influence, whatsoever may claim kin
To it, whilst sojourning here, if it stoopeth not
To pass beneath the yoke of earth-born joys;
But of all who do, the inevitable lot
Is, without hope beyond, to endure death's stroke,
And whatsoe'er of evil death implies.

The bard has thus achieved, and founded on
An old and popular tradition,
A select and vivid chronicle of time,
However vast, not vague in its design;
Where, doubtless, many an impulse, many a feeling
Ascribed to Faust, is only the revealing
Of the poet's own internal impulses.
It may be Wagner, Margaret, are no less
Sketched from reality; that Euphorion
Is a wayward spirit, Albion, of thine own.
And what if many a page, and many a scene, were
Passing events or ancient legends based on?
It but shows that genius is a dexterous gleaner,
And that *one* of its various powers is appropriation.
I leave this—all unfitted for the toil—
To those who love to burn the midnight oil

Digitized by Google

In such research. Crude hints, and commonplace,
Into the crucible of genius thrown,
By an alchemic process, all its own,
Come forth imbued with living power and grace;
Nay, even the pure gold, from another's mine
Of thought, it hath a licence to refine,
And put its own stamp on, with noble daring,
Its use extending, and its glory sharing.
Great general truths, in allegoric dress,
It is the artist's purpose to express;
Nor less his purpose, whilst enforcing these,
To show, in detail, those realities,
Those elements of the absolute which make
The various groupings that time's pictures take;
Hence, in its form, and in its spirit, dramatic,
All the characters, subordinate as prime,
Not by reflected light, in a symptomatic
Way, but with unborrowed lustre shine.
And, though it plainly is the bard's intent,
By each character, a class to represent,
All are graphic likenesses, distinct and strong,
Of individual nature. By a throng
Of vivid thoughts and imagery, that seem
Living existences, not a musing dream,
Even the soliloquies hurry the mind along.
From the opening scene, where, in a schoolman's cell,
Of all strange crotchets the receptacle,
'Midst worm-pierced tomes, from the vext brains of yore
Deriving origin—o'er which to pore
Had been his lot, as 'twas his sire's before—
Faust sits; and proves, how joyless and how vain
The self-derived creations of the brain;
Through those, where he muses upon nature's glory,
On the mountain's brow, or in the forest hoary;

Digitized by Google

Through those of mere debauchery, strife, or noise;
Through those, unfolding the best earthly joys
Man ever did or ever will discover—
The kindly glances changed by wishing eyes,
The best of loving hearts 'gainst one another;
Through that dread scene of madness, in the cell,
Which more unnerved me than I care to tell;
Whether in solitude, or where crowds resort;
'Neath a cottage roof, or in an emperor's court;
Whether, the loftiest aims the human mind
Can cope withal, are sought to be embodied;
Whether all that's gentle, loveable, and kind,
Or spiteful, or nonsensical, or horrid;
If pathos, or if bathos, task his powers;
Or if the bard, with quiet humour, shows
On how much emptiness this world of ours
High-sounding names and pompous praise bestows—
Are they not all with stirring interest thronged?
Nor less in the mystic ones, that lie beyond
Daylight experience, and the world's routine,
Is the same all-vivifying power seen.
Even mere abstractions, graceful or grotesque,
Conveying truths profound, or mere burlesque,
With startling vividness before us pass,
Forth glancing from that true magician's glass,
The gifted poet's mind: such as all eyes
Recognize; to which, in the motliest mass,
Each human heart, with answering throb, replies.
Yes, howe'er strange and various they may seem,
Through all the same creative spirit's seen,
Pervading, harmonizing, ever bent
On working out the original intent:
Of showing, in its strength and weakness too,
Humanity in one stupendous view;

Digitized by Google

Its powers, lone and collective, to rehearse,
And its relation to the universe.

Various the measure—far more various, even,
Than this, through which my commentaries glide.
In part I have, in part I have not striven,
(I have implicitly in all beside)
In this respect, by the master to abide;
And I would, gladly, have the reasons given—
For such, not chance, the matter did decide—
Why not throughout, were it not superfluous boring.
Certes, not in the measure, but in me
The fault lies, if the spirit's lost, in pouring
From one flask to another: Poesy,
Like beauty that is *really* worth adoring,
Charms one in any sort of drapery;
And, though I own their fascinating powers,
Rhymes are real fetters, although formed of flowers;
Though rhythm must be, for, to treat the subject fair,
The mind should glide thro' its scenes as a sea-mew thro' the air.

Such the form, the theme, and the prevailing views—
Or such they seem to me—of this great drama;
Whose lesser sphere, and greater,
The artist thus unfolds.
From the innumerous ever-shifting scenes
Of the living world in which man acts and suffers,
Selection first is made,
With long-considered choice,
To show humanity, as it exists
Amidst the daily intercourse of life,
Bound by conventional ties
Of its own strange devising.
Alas, man's life! or past in toil or leisure,
How brief, how petty, at the best, it is!

Digitized by Google

Unto an ant-hill's legions,
Or those winged atomies,
Frail, restless, circling, strangely formed, ephemeral,
Warmed into life by, sinking with, the sun,
Its hopes, its fears, its aims,
Might aptly be compared—
Save, for occasional outbreaks, which the spirit
Will make at times, however closely pent,
To the great, the ideal world
In which the lesser floats.
Thence, through a wider range of thought and action,
With like selection, is the theme pursued:
Lo! strength, fraud, superstition,
Philosophy, and fancy,
Through the medium of the intellect and passions,
Ruling earth's rulers, and the hordes they rule;
Ruled by the Infinite,
That girds them, and impels.
Oh, the godlike efforts! the strange aberrations!
The crude, the lovely, the fantastic dreams!
Down, from hoar antiquity,
To the existent hour.
Thence, through what Faith unfolds to blue-eyed Hope
Of those pure regions, where the Beautiful,
Embraced by perfect love,
Dwells in serenest bliss.

CORRIGENDA.

Page 44 last line but one, *for* near *read* with.
98 last line *for* tender *read* slender.

Digitized by Google

F A U S T.

A TRAGEDY.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

DEDICATION.

As in life's morning to my troubled sight,
Ye shadowy forms, approach ye once again?
And have I power at length to stay your flight?
Yearns my heart still for your delusive reign?
Be it so then, and not as erst in vain.
In vapoury mists ye rise, about me throng,
A magic atmosphere surrounds your train,
Ye stir within me feelings that belong
To youthful days, when first I sought relief in song.

And imaged memories arise with you—
Of first love, like some dim tradition now,
Of happy days, of friends beloved and true,
Of many a parting pang, and passionate vow;
And as the phantoms flit before my brow,
And as reviving sorrow seeks to trace
The backward course of life's sad labyrinth, how
The features gleam of each familiar face,
Amidst fair hopes untimely snatched from my embrace.

Digitized by Google

They who first listened to my youthful song
The strains that I weave now will never hear;
Dispersed, alas, are all that friendly throng
Whose approbation was to me so dear.
Fame's sweetest echo dies upon my ear;
And if I now give Fancy scope and form,
The applause—if such there be—the starting tear,
But make my heart sick, though sincere and warm,
For the appeal is made unto a stranger swarm.

But ah! unwonted tremors overwhelm;
And what hath long been alien to my breast,
A yearning for that pensive spirit realm,
Seizes me now, and may not be supprest;
And tender thoughts are struggling to invest
Themselves in language—though imperfectly,
Like the Eolian harp's tones, first exprest.
Now the stern heart melts, tear follows tear; I see
The present fade—the past becomes reality.

Digitized by Google

PRELUDE IN THE THEATRE.

Well, here we are, arrived in Germany.
I claim of you two, who have oft before
Aided me at a nonplus, now to try
Your best, to make our new spec. quite secure.
I like to please the multitude—and why?
Because it lives and lets live, to be sure.
The poles and screens are fixt, and boards to seat,
And every body's ready for a treat.

Ay, there they sit already, with raised brows,
Longing to wonder and to criticize.
To hit the public taste, none but allows
My ready tact; and yet I can't disguise,
Now as I ponder on the whens and hows
Of this our somewhat dubious enterprize,
That I am posed; that difficulties hem a-
round, and put me in a strange dilemma.

To be sure they're not accustomed to the best;
But then they read immensely, that's the worst on't.

Digitized by Google

We must vamp up something new, to give them zest;
Unless they fancy that they have the first on't,
However good the pathos or the jest,
Certes, no thunders of applause will burst on't;
And when from crowded benches I hear such,
Assuredly it doth delight me much.

Assuredly, it is a cheering sight
To see the folks, in one continuous tide,
Flow onward to our booth, in broad daylight,
And jostling, with wedged elbows, side by side,
Backwards and forwards swerving, left and right,
Like a huge billow, in one blended mass,
Struggling to enter at the narrow pass.

As in a famine, at a baker's door
For bread; so, to obtain a ticket,
At the risk of suffocation, on they pour,
Striving to reach the check-dispenser's wicket,
Where, amidst squeezing, fainting, are held o'er
Of eager hands and arms a very thicket.
The power, all minds thus to one mood to sway,
Is the poet's.—Pray, friend, work this miracle today.

POET.

Oh! speak not of that motley crowd.
Oh! hide me from their vulgar stare;

Digitized by Google

My senses from such hubbub shroud,
Or all poetic thoughts you'll scare.
As in a whirlpool, vext and loud,
One, 'gainst his will, gets sucked in there.

Rather let some green nook be mine,
Calm as the scenes of fairy land,
Where Love's and Friendship's hands entwine
The flowers, that brighten and expand
Around the heart—that Delphic shrine
Whose breathings none else may command.

What from the spirit's inmost store,
Through quivering lips, long strives to pass,
Now ebbing back, now flowing o'er,
Coy as the love-tale a young lass
Into a sister's ear doth pour,
Is all unfitted for the mass.

Thoughts that the heart hath brooded o'er
For years, in one brief moment may
Be swallowed midst their untamed roar,
As the wild mood may chance to sway.
For posterity such should endure;
Tinsel but glitters for the day.

Digitized by Google

COMEDIAN.

How glad should I be, to be sure,
Of this posterity to hear no more.
Suppose about such stuff *I* talked,
Whither would the living run
To get a bit of fun?
And of that they won't, nor ought they to be balked.
The presence of a gallant sprightly lad—
When such is to be had—
Should go for something too, egad!
And who can fluently his thoughts express
Will never heed the mob's capriciousness;
The more their numbers, the more pleased is he,
He excites them with the greater certainty.
Pray don't look as if thunderstruck,
But show yourself a man of pluck,
And give the world a model.
Let fancy breathe in many a chorus,
Place reason, passion, wit, before us,
Nor fail to exhibit folly's yeasty noddle.

MANAGER.

Also, 'tis my particular desire
That you will furnish incident enough.
Folks come to feast their eyes, and so require
Plenty to stare at—give them quantum suff.,
And you'll be a favourite; they'll all admire;

Digitized by Google

The mass can only by a mass of stuff
Be won; bring much, and you'll please many,
For, after all, every one's best pleased when he
Picks out himself something to suit his taste:
So, when you give a piece, give it in pieces,
Dashed off at once, in easy careless haste;
A hash of all sorts every body pleases;
Easy to cook, easy to serve, no waste,
For what one slights another gladly seizes.
Why toil to form a *whole*, where each part fits?
Do what you will they'll swallow it in bits.

POET.

The baseness of such mere mechanic art
You do not comprehend;
The maxims of the drudge per line, by heart,
You seem to have, my friend.

MANAGER.

Let the galled jade wince, my withers are unwrung
By such reproof as this. They who intend
To work with effect, must set due value on
The best tools for the purpose. Think, my friend,
What mere deal you've to split; do prithee run
The list o'er in your mind of those through the pen
You have to appeal to:——with good cheer
O'ergorged, from the table some come listless here;

Digitized by Google

Ennui drives others; and, what's worse than all,
Many come fresh and hot from politics;
With dissipated notions, great and small
Come hither, through the medium of our oily wicks
To wile a weary hour; as to a ball,
Or masquerade, where ever-restless folly tricks
Her votaries out; and their looks and dress the ladies
Come to display—helping the actors gratis.

From thy poetic height what stuff art dreaming?
What is it, pray, that makes a full house merry?
Half cold, half raw, this one perhaps sits scheming
To-morrow's plans; and that one looks with very
Great pleasure forward to the last act, meaning
To treat himself to a ——— and pint of sherry.
What absorbs ye, joy or pain? Give more, more, mystify,
To satisfy the people's all my eye.

POET.

Begone at once—another servant choose!
A real poet may not so abuse
The noblest gift that Nature can confer.
By what means sets he every heart astir,
By what is every element subdued,
But by the harmony wherewith he's imbued,
That, spreading from his bosom swift as light,
Sucks back again the whole world in its might?

Digitized by Google

When fate's interminable threads are wound
By nature carelessly her spindle round;
When, of all beings, the perplexing throng
Confus'dly jangles out of tune and wrong;
Who but the bard, with life-infusing lyre,
To arrange the seeming discord may aspire?
Who cites the individual to its place
In the general consecration, where with grace
It chimes in glad and glorious accord?
Who bids wild passions rage, and, at a word,
Spreads the red glow of eve o'er the pensive spirit?
Who into garlands, for all kinds of merit,
Weaves th'else unmeaning green leaves? Who is't strows
O'er the loved one's path the lily and the rose,
And spreads hope's sunshine round her? Who doth soar
Through the subtle ether, brighter realms to explore,
And after converse at each hallowed shrine,
Brings back to mother earth tidings divine,
Traditions else undreamt of? Human might
Through the poet is made manifest.

COMEDIAN.

Then tonight
Employ this power, and let your drama run,
Much as a love-affair is carried on;
Chance flings a beauty in one's way,
One gazes—feels one knows not how;

Digitized by Google

Approaches, makes a bow;
Gets agitated,
Gets elated;
One stays, and stays,
With fond delays,
Now delighted, now distrest,
Which gives desire fresh zest,
Till, by insensible advance,
Betwixt jesting and protesting,
It grows to be a real romance.
After this fashion frame your play;
Into the thick of human life
Plunge boldly, and without delay
Seize what comes first to hand; all is with interest rife;
Every one lives it o'er,
And yet few know it, or explore;
Vague images in motley hues,
With a sunlit haze thrown o'er them;
Much falsehood, with a dash of truth, infuse
Into the nectar you brew for them,
Then all the world to please you can't but choose:
Then gentle minds in innocence strong,
Youth's ardent throng,
Will to your revealings listen;
Their eager eyes will glisten,
As here and there, among

Digitized by Google

The incidents or sentiments,
Each finds something that presents
Likeness to what he carries in his heart;
Ready, or to laugh or cry,
Careless of the reason why.
To please a formed mind small the chance is,
But one forming ever feels
Delight in him that upward still advances,
Up, up, till their young thought reels.
Their warm gratitude he hath;
Pleased they track his shining path.

POET.

Then give me back again those golden days
When I myself was forming; when fresh lays
Gushed forth unbrokenly from my full heart;
Then, when I deemed that every bud would start
Into a miracle of beauty; when
I culled the wild flowers of my native glen,
And gazed in rapture on their thousand hues,
And felt their odours and their forms diffuse
Freshness and beauty through my thrilling frame;
(How poor compared to this the crowd's acclaim!)
When mists around my youthful world did lie,
And veiled it in a pleasing mystery;
When I, with nought, possessed an ample store,
The intuitive longing Truth's paths to explore,

Digitized by Google

And Hope's delusion, gilding all things o'er.
Oh, give me back those impulses again!
Happiness, goaded to the verge of pain;
The might of Love; the energy of Hate:
Give me back youth in all its untamed state!

COMEDIAN.

Of youth, my friend, you stand in need, no doubt,
When foes press hard and put you to the rout;
When round your neck the loveliest lass of all,
With ardour clinging, holds you in her thrall;
When still far off the garland you espy,
To gain which over the swift course you fly;
When in the dance's mad whirl half the night
Is passed, the other, till the dawning light,
In deep carouse. But the familiar lyre
To handle with a master's ease and fire,
With many a seeming pause, and graceful bend
To sweep towards some self-appointed end,
Elderly gentlemen! that task is yours;
Nor grudge we the applause that it secures.
Old age doth not bring childishness, whate'er
People may say, it only makes more clear,
That we're true children through our whole career.

MANAGER.

Enough, enough; cease bandying words I pray,
And let us come to deeds, friends, if you please.

Digitized by Google

At the game of compliments whilst you're at play,
The play I want seems no way to increase.
'Tis all a hum 'bout being in the mood, I say;
Who hesitates ne'er is, one plainly sees.
If you're a poet, as you claim to be,
Supply my order for your poesy.

You well know what is wanted; we are lacking
Some good strong stuff; so brew away, my friend,
And don't waste time in dallying and quacking:
Let resolution her bold arm extend,
And seize the possible; jibbing nor backing
She'll then know, but pull right on to the end—
Because she can't avoid it; what's not doing
Today will ne'er be done the day ensuing.

You well know, too, that on our German stage
Each tries what suits his fancy; therefore spare
Nor scenery nor machinery. I'll engage
For all that sort of thing. Let lightning glare;
Let there be sunshine, moonshine; let storms rage;
I can supply the needful. So prepare,
In this small booth, to spread creation out; [route.
And from heaven, through earth, to hell, trace me the

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

THE PROLOGUE IN HEAVEN.

The LORD—*the* HOSTS OF HEAVEN—*afterwards* MEPHISTOPHELES.

[*The three Angels come forward.*]

RAPHAEL.

PEALING forth to brother spheres
His alternating song,
On his thunder-march the sun careers
His destined path along.
The view of all that his splendour cheers
Maketh the angels strong.
The inconceivable whole appears,
As on the day when to form it sprung,
Magnificent and young.

GABRIEL.

And swifter than thought's lightning glance,
See Earth's revolving face assume
Sunshine and gloom;
Scenes fair as Eden now advance,
And now the blackness of the tomb.
Against the deep-based rocks, the sea

Digitized by Google

Heaves its broad waves, that foaming sever;
And rocks and billows are whirled on together,
In the sphere's rapidity.

MICHAEL.

And rival storms are raging 'gainst each other,
From sea to land, from land to sea.
What deep fermenting elements!
How torn in sudden rents,
As for the thunderbolt, red lightnings scathe
A desolate path!
But from angels praise is owing,
For thy own day's placid going.

THE THREE.

The view of all that his splendour cheers
Maketh the angels strong.
The inconceivable whole appears,
As on the day when to form it sprung,
Magnificent and young.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Since, Lord, you hold a levée once again,
Kindly to ask how all are getting on;
And since you have, on more than one occasion,
Been not unpleased to see me—lo, I stand
Amidst your worshipping suite! But pray excuse
My homely phrases, for I can't talk fine
Though all your courtiers should exclaim against me.

Digitized by Google

Besides, though you've forsworn the laughing mood,
My awkward way of doing the pathetic
Would make you laugh as you were wont of old.
Nothing have I to say of suns and worlds,
I only note how Man torments himself.
That pigmy god of earth is still the same
Odd restless sort of nondescript as ever.
If you had not given him glimpses of heaven's light,
He might have led a more consistent life;
But as it is, this reason, as he calls it,
Serves but to make his own brutality
Plainer than that of the poor brutes around him.
Saving your Grace's presence—he seems like
Those long-legged grasshoppers, that make short starts,
Half flying and half bounding, and then sink
To chirp the same old sing-song in the grass.
If he'd remain there 'twould be well enough,
But into every mess he thrusts his nose.

THE LORD.

Is this the sum of what you have to say?
Is your sole aim in coming here complaint?
Is nothing to your liking on the earth?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Your Highness, no; things there are bad as ever;
Men pass their time in so much wretchedness,
That I, in sooth, have not the heart to plague them.

Digitized by Google

THE LORD.

Dost thou know Faust?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

The Doctor?

THE LORD.

My servant.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Faith, then, it must be after his own fashion.
The pedant's sustenance is not of earth;
His restless and fermenting spirit goads him
Ever towards the unattainable.
He is himself half conscious of his madness.
Of heaven, he claims its very brightest stars;
Of earth, demands its every highest pleasure.
But nor the far away, nor near, contents
The longings of his agitated breast.

THE LORD.

If now, 'midst his dim wilderness, he serves me,
Ere long I will conduct him into light.
When a tree buds, the gardener feels assured
That flowers and fruits will crown the coming season.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

What will you bet on that? You'll lose him yet,
If you let me have my own way with him fairly.

THE LORD.

So long as he abideth upon earth,

Digitized by Google

So long be nought forbidden thee to try.
Whilst he is struggling, man is prone to error.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

I feel obliged to you. I never had
A fancy for the dead—plump cheeks for me!
Mine is the cat's sport with a captive mouse;
I'm not at home to corpses.

THE LORD.

'Tis enough;
Thou hast permission. Entice this spirit,
If thou canst do so, from his being's source,
And hurry him the downward path with thee;
But stand abashed, when thou'rt compelled to own,
A good man, in his dark bewilderment,
May still be conscious of the proper path.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Well and good. The fun will not last long, though.
I'm not at all alarmed about my bet.
Forgive my crowing, if I gain my point.
He shall eat dust, with such relish as of old
My cousin-german did, the famous snake.

THE LORD.

In this you're free to act as suits you best.
Beings of your sort I have never hated.
Of all the spirits who deny, the sneerer
Is least offensive to me. Far too prone

Digitized by Google

To languish are the energies of man;
He gets enamoured soon of mere repose;
Therefore I not unwillingly permit
Companionship with one who stirs and works,
And must perforce, as demon, be adoing.
But ye true sons of Deity! rejoice
In the living fulness of the beautiful.
The bounteous essence, living and working ever,
Surround ye with the boundaries of love;
And what flits changefully, stedfast but in seeming,
Do ye make stedfast by enduring thought.

[*Heaven closes—the archangels disperse.*

MEPHISTOPHELES (*alone*).

Visits here, from time to time,
Just with my convenience chime,
And so I take care to be civil.
'Tis marvellous kind, upon my word,
For such a high and mighty lord
To talk so cozily with me—the Devil.

Digitized by Google

THE TRAGEDY:

PART I.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

NIGHT.

FAUST, *in a narrow high-vaulted Gothic room, restless, seated on a stool at his desk.*

FAUST.

I HAVE at length, by dint of zealous toil,
Mastered philosophy, jurisprudence, medicine,
Theology, and all—the more's my grief!
And here I am, poor hopeless fool, precisely
As wise as when I first began to study.
'Master of Arts,' and 'Doctor,' I am styled;
And now for some ten years have I been leading
Successive sets of pupils upwards, downwards,
Cross-ways, and crooked, by the nose, and see
That we can in reality know nothing.
'Tis this that cuts me to the very heart!
True that I'm abler, that I look beyond
The herd of solemn triflers—Doctors, Masters, [me,
Priests, scribblers; that nor doubts nor scruples plague
That of neither hell nor devil I'm in dread;
But from this very cause all joy hath left me.

Digitized by Google

I no more fancy I know aught worth knowing;
No longer deem that I have power to teach
Aught that would better or convert mankind.
And then I've neither land, cash, rank, nor honours.
The vilest cur would spurn at such a life.
Therefore I now devote myself to magic,
To prove if, through the spirit's power and voice,
I may not fathom many a mystery yet;
May not yet learn the secret cause that holds
The world together in its inmost core;
If I may not behold the springs at work,
If I may not see the primal germs of being;
If, by its aid, I may not cease to strive,
With bitter sweat, to utter what I know not,
And drive no more a paltry trade in words.
Oh would that thou wert shining, full-orb'd moon,
For the last time upon my wretchedness!
Thou whom at midnight, seated at this desk,
I've watched so often, tinging books and papers
With melancholy light. Oh, might I rather
Wander on mountain-tops 'neath thy loved beams!
Hover with spirits round the mountain caves!
Flit o'er the verdant pastures in thy radiance!
And, 'scaped from the perplexing fumes of knowledge,
Reinvigorated bathe in thy pure dews!
Woe's me! am I still penned up in this cell?

Digitized by Google

This musty, this accurst, this walled-up hole,
With smoke-stained paper reaching to the roof;
Glasses and boxes stuck about at random,
And dusty instruments on all sides piled;
Ancestral lumber stuffed in with the rest;
Where even the all-cheering light of heaven,
Through the stained glass, gleams mournfully and dim,
Broken and stinted by this pile of books,
Worm-eaten, and begrimed with mould and dust.
This is thy world—a famous world indeed!
And ask'st thou why thy heart panteth for freedom?
Why an inexplicable pain doth palsy
Life's stirring impulses? when thou, instead
Of the living nature for which God made man,
Hast round thee nought but skeletons of beasts,
And dead men's dust-grimed bones.
Up, up—away!
Away into the wide and breathing world,
With this book of NOSTRADAMUS for thy guide.
Then wilt thou know the courses of the stars;
Then, with great Nature's self for thy instructress,
The essence of the soul will rise before thee,
And speak, as spirits speak to one another.
To expound its signs by poring here is hopeless.
Spirits! ye are hovering near, if ye hear me, answer!

[*He opens the book, and observes the sign of the macrocosm.*]

Digitized by Google

Heavens, what rapture thrills me at this sight!
I feel a freshly hallowed zest of life
Glowing anew through every nerve and vein.
Was it a god that traced these mystic signs,
Stilling the strife within, filling my heart
With joy, unveiling to my raptured view,
By mystic inspiration, Nature's powers?
Am I myself a god?—all seems so bright!
Nature herself in these clear lines I trace
Labouring in the presence of my soul.
Now first I catch the meaning of the sage—
'The spirit-world around thee lies,
'Open as the sunny skies.
'Thy heart is torpid, and thy mind
'In a dark cell is confined.
'Student! in morn's crimson dyes
'To bathe thy earthly breast, arise!'
How all into a whole themselves are blending!
Working and living interchangeably.
How the heavenly powers, ascending and descending,
Their joy-diffusing fragrant pinions ply.
From every quarter of the star-thronged sky
Thorough earth's veins they glide;
Each individual tone of extasy
Blent into one consenting tide
Of all-pervading harmony.

Digitized by Google

What a show it is! but ah, 'tis nothing more.
Infinite Nature, how may I embrace thee?
Thy breasts with nourishment are gushing o'er—
Those teeming breasts that nourish earth and heaven,
And after which the blighted mind hath striven—
Why do I pine in vain? why vainly chase thee?

[*He turns over the book in an indignant manner, and sees the sign of the Spirit of the Earth.*]

How differently doth this sign affect me!
Thou art nearer to me, Spirit of the Earth!
I feel my energies are more exalted!
I feel my spirit working like new wine!
I've courage now to cast myself on the world,
To endure all earthly weal, all earthly woe;
With storms to struggle, and 'midst the shipwreck's crash
To stand unshaken. Clouds thicken over me,
The moonlight fades, the pale lamp dies away,
Vapours arise, red beams surround my head,
A shudder, from the dome descending, grasps me.
I feel it! thou art hovering round me now,
Thou Spirit, prayer-compelled! unveil thyself!
Seems as my heart were rending, and my senses
Are all astir with new and strange sensation!
My whole soul is abandoned now to thee;
Thou must—thou must—if it should cost my life!

Digitized by Google

[*He seizes the book, and pronounces mystically the sign of the Spirit; a red flame gushes up;*]

The SPIRIT *appears in the flame.*

SPIRIT.

Who bids me here?

FAUST (*turning away*).

Horrible apparition!

SPIRIT.

After long working at my sphere,
Thou hast potently attracted me, magician!

FAUST.

Oh torture! I endure thee not, dread vision!

SPIRIT.

To know me, upon me to gaze,
Pantingly the earth-born prays;
His powerful spell
Doth my presence compel;
Lo I am here! and doth he quail
With miserable terror? What doth ail
The superhuman? Where's the soul's vocation?
The breast, whose inspiration
Served to create, uphold, contain
A world within its own domain?
That swelled with thrilling extasy
To lift itself to what we spirits be?

Digitized by Google

Where art thou, Faust?
Whose voice was't roused,
Through the depths of space, mine ear?
That to my sphere
Would proudly rise?
Who pressed on me with all his energies?
Canst thou be he—this shrinking form,
Thus shivering and affrighted;
A trembling, writhing worm,
By my mere breath blighted?

FAUST.

Know I am Faust. Shall I yield to thee,
Thou fire-formed mystery?

SPIRIT.

'Midst the boundless tide of life,
Swept by storms, with action rife,
There I find my fitting place,
Prompting every idle chase.
Over that mysterious sea,
Where birth and death eternally
At hide-and-seek pop in and out,
Hither and thither, I flit about.
I work at the shifting loom of time,
And weave all the visible drapery
Of the invisible Deity.
A changeful glowing life is mine.

Digitized by Google

FAUST.

Busy Spirit! thou that round the wide world sweepest,
How near akin I feel to thee.

SPIRIT.

Thou'rt mate for the spirit whom thou conceivest,
Not for me. [*Vanishes.*

FAUST (*collapsing*).

Not thy compeer—I, the image of Deity!
Whom then do I come near.
A knocking at the door.] 'Sdeath!
I know the sound—'tis that of my assistant.
My clearest joy at once turned into nought!
That the dry plodder ever should disturb
Such full revealing!

WAGNER *enters in dressing-gown and night-cap, with a lamp in his hand*; FAUST *turns round displeased.*

WAGNER.

Pardon me, you're declaiming?
Studying some Greek tragedy, no doubt.
I wish so much to improve myself i' the art,
For now-a-days it may be turned to account.
An actor, I have heard, may teach a priest.

FAUST.

Yes, if the priest should chance to be an actor,
Which is possible.

Digitized by Google

WAGNER.

Ah! when, as I am,
A man is so much pent up in his study,
And even on holidays, of the *real* world
But gets a distant glimpse, as through a telescope,
How by persuasion can he hope to guide it?

FAUST.

If it burst not impulsively from the soul,
Flooding all hearts, it never will be yours;
Hunt for it as you will, the chase is vain.
You may sit and plod for ever, glue and dovetail,
From another's feast purloin and hash up scraps,
And, puffing to a dubious fitful flame
Your own small stock of fuel, with vast effort,
May gain applause from children and from apes,
If you've a taste for it, but you will never
Command the sympathy of any heart,
Save by what gushes freshly from your own.

WAGNER.

Surely an orator's success depends
On a good delivery; I know that well,
Though far behind-hand yet in its acquirement.

FAUST.

Don't be a bell-hung mule; let your aims be honest;
Good sense and reason need but little art
For their expression; when one's really bent

Digitized by Google

On saying something, needs one hunt for words?
I tell you that your highly polished speeches,
Bedizening and befrizzling human nature,
Are as unquickening as the bleak mist winds
That whistle through the withered leaves in autumn.

WAGNER.

Alas! but art is long, and life is short.
How often do I suffer, head and heart,
When studying critically, and collating!
How hard to compass are the means, by which
One mounts to the fountain-head! and probably
A poor devil, ere he has got half way, must die.

FAUST.

Is parchment then the Zem-zem, one blest draught
From whose pure source allays the thirst for ever?
Of this be sure, unless from thy own soul
It gushes, the elixir is not gained.

WAGNER.

But, with submission, surely the pleasure's great,
Into the very spirit of the times
To be able to transport one's self, and see
How wise men thought before us, and to what
A daring height we have advanced it since?

FAUST.

Oh yes, up to the very stars! My friend,
Past ages are to us a seven-sealed book.

Digitized by Google

What people call the spirit of the times
Is at the bottom merely their own spirit,
Reflecting the said times in their own fashion.
And what an exhibition 'tis, full oft!
A single glance oft makes one fly from it.
A lumber-room, a sweepings-tub,—or, at best,
A show of statesmanship, with pompous maxims
In the fantoccini's mouths for the sake of euphony.

WAGNER.

But then the world! the hearts and minds of men!
Who would not like to know something of these?

FAUST.

Aye, true; but what is understood by knowing?
Who dares to call the brat by its true name?
The few who have ever in reality
Known aught about it, and who foolishly
Did not keep careful guard o'er their full hearts,
But to the multitude proclaimed what they
Had felt and seen; these, time immemorial,
Have been burnt and crucified. Friend, I beg—
The night's far advanced—that we may now break off.

WAGNER.

Fain would I still keep waking, to enjoy
Such learned converse; howe'er on the morrow—
Easter-day—you must permit me to propose
Some further questions. Heart and soul am I

Digitized by Google

Given up to study, with entire devotion.
True I know much, but I would fain know all.

[*Exit.*

FAUST (*alone*).

How hope abideth but in his dull brain,
Who cleaves with constancy to commonplace!
Who gropes with eager search for sordid treasures,
Crowing o'er every earth-worm that he finds.
Dares such a merely human voice sound here,
Where all so lately did resound with spirit?
And yet this once my thanks are due to thee,
Thou very poorest of the sons of earth.
Thou hast saved me from despair, which had all but gained
The upper hand of sense. Alas! alas!
So gigantically great was that dread vision,
That I felt shrunk into a puny dwarf;
I, the image of the Deity, who already
Thought myself grasping Truth's eternal mirror;
I, who revelled in heaven's lustrous clearness,
My sordid earthly covering quite stript off;
I, more than cherub, whose unprisoned spirit
Sought to glide through Nature's veins, and to enjoy
In full creative might the life of Deity!
What atonement must I make? One thunder-word
Hath swept me wide away.

Digitized by Google

I dare not now,
Dare not presume to mate myself with thee.
To draw thee to me, if the power was mine,
The power to hold thee fast hath been denied me.
In that blest moment, when I felt so little
Yet so great withal, thou didst fiercely thrust me
Back on humanity's uncertain lot.
Oh! who will teach me? What shall I avoid?
Must I obey that impulse? Alas, alas!
Actions not less than sufferings clog life's course.
Something that's alien to it ever clings
To the most noble and sublime conception
The human mind can form. When he has acquired
The good of this world, man calls what is better
Falsehood and vanity. The glorious feelings
Which gave us life, and give life its sole value,
All become torpid in the worldly throng.
Although at first Fancy, with daring sail,
And full of hope, may launch forth on the infinite,
A small space serves to limit her desires.
When venture after venture hath been wrecked
In time's unsated whirlpool, then in the heart,
Aye, in its inmost depths, care builds her nest,
Hatches vague tortures there and rocks them ceaselessly
And scares all joy, all peace away for ever.
There dwells she, masquing aye in some new guise;

Digitized by Google

It may be in the shape of house and land;
Of wife and children; of fires, floods, or poison.
Man's doomed to live in dread of what ne'er happens,
To wail for ever what he doth not lose.
I feel with pain how unlike the gods I am.
I rather may compare with the poor worm,
Which, writhing in the soil to preserve existence,
By the chance step of the traveller 's crushed and buried.
And what but dust is all upon these shelves,
Narrowing the narrow space these walls enclose?
This frippery, in its thousand empty forms,
Cramping me up in a world of moths and book-worms?
Is this the place for finding what I want?
Must I plod on, reading in a thousand books
That—with some rare exceptions—in all ages
Man hath lived in misery of his own creating?
What art thou grinning at, thou fleshless skull,
Save that like mine thy brain was once perplext,
Once, with an ardent longing after truth,
Sought the bright day, but in the dubious twilight
Went miserably astray?——Ye instruments,
Ye too, forsooth, must mock me with your wheels
And cogs and cylinders and screws and pinions!
I stood at the gate, ye were to be the keys;
But, though your wards are curiously twisted,
Ye have not turned aside the bolts. Great Nature,

Digitized by Google

Inscrutable even amidst broad day-light,
Lets not the veil she shrouds in be torn off;
And what she doth not of her own free will
Choose to reveal, will not be wrested from her
By levers, pulleys, or such like devices.
  You antique lumber, I have never used;
Because my sire required you, ye are here.
Old roll, thou hast lain begrimed in smoke since first
My lamp began to blacken from this desk.
Better have flung to the winds the slender stock
Of lore that I inherited, than thus
To sweat beneath its weight. Wouldst thou possess
What thy ancestors bequeath thee, re-acquire it.
What we make not ours by our own exertions,
What our own brooding spirit doth not vivify,
Is a mere incumbrance to us.——But why
Are my eyes fixt, as if by fascination,
On yonder phial? Hath it the magnet's power?
Why of a sudden doth all round me seem
So exquisitely bright? as when the moonlight bursts
Round some benighted traveller in the woods.
  I hail thee, thou rare phial! I take thee down
With fitting reverence: in thee, I honour
The wit and art of man; thou, the abstraction
Of kind and soporific juices; thou,
Of all refined and deadly essences

Digitized by Google

The concentration. Oh, vouchsafe thy master
A token of thy grace. I gaze upon thee,
And the pang is mitigated. I grasp thee,
And the strife abates; the flood-tide of the spirit
Ebbs gradual; I'm beckoned forth on the wide sea,
The crystal waves fall glittering at my feet;
Another day invites to other shores.

A fiery chariot on light pinions comes
Gracefully curving down. I feel prepared
By a new track to glide through the realms of space,
On to new spheres of pure activity.

Oh this sublime existence! Oh this god-like
Beatitude! And thou—worm as thou wert—
Dost thou merit it? Aye, if resolutely
Thou turn'st thy back upon this earth's bright sun;
If thou darest to burst open those dread gates
Which all besides so timidly slink past.
Now is the fitting time by deeds to show
That the inherent dignity of man
Yields not to the sublimity of God;
To quail not, in sight of that dark abyss,
Where fancy damns itself to its own torments;
To struggle on to the pass whose straitened gorge
Hell doth with flames encircle; to resolve
With calmness on the step, even at the risk
Of sinking into the abyss of nothingness.

Digitized by Google

Forth from thy old receptacle advance,
Thou pure crystalline goblet! upon whom
I have not cast a thought for many a year.
At my sire's festivals thou oft wert wont
To gladden the grave guests as they passed thee round
To each other. The gorgeousness of all
The images wrought with such curious art;
The drinker's duty, first in rhyme to explain them,
Then quaff off thy contents in one deep draught;
Of many a night in youth all this reminds me.
I shall not pass thee to a neighbour now,
Or display my wit by expounding thy devices.
Here is a draught that soon intoxicates;
With this brown juice I fill thee to the brim;
Be this last draught—which I myself have brewed,
Which I freely choose—drunk off with my whole soul,
As a solemn festal greeting to this morn.

[*He puts the goblet to his lips.*

[*The ringing of bells and singing of choruses.*]

CHORUS OF ANGELS.

Christ hath ascended on high;
Joy to mortality! joy!
Ancestral imperfections now,
Unenduring, servile, low,
No longer enshrine

Digitized by Google

Its essence divine.
Joy to mortality! joy!

FAUST.

What deep preluding sounds, what matchless strain,
Thus, with resistless impulse, draws away
The goblet from my lips? Are ye already
Proclaiming Easter's first glad festal hour,
Ye hollow sounding bells? Are ye already
Chanting, ye choruses, that hymn of comfort,
Which erst on the sepulchral night pealed forth
From angels' lips, and gave the world assurance
Of a new covenant with guilty man?

CHORUS OF WOMEN.

With rich and fragrant spices, we
Embalmed his body carefully;
And stretched, and laid him as was meet,
And swathed him in the burial sheet.
But ah! his relics dear
We come—his followers true—
Through bursting tears to view,
And find no longer here.

CHORUS OF ANGELS.

Christ is re-seated above!
He, who from infinite love,
Through the trial, wholesome though austere,
Afflicting, chastening, and severe,

Digitized by Google

Successfully strove
In the fulness of love.
Christ is re-seated above!

FAUST.

Celestial tones, with your subduing softness,
Why do ye seek me out here in the dust?
Peal forth where more confiding hearts are found.
I hear the message, but I have not faith—
That faith whose darling child is miracle.
I dare not struggle towards those spheres from whence
Those joyful tidings come; and yet from childhood
Accustomed, as I have been, to the sound,
It still hath power to call me back to life.
In by-gone days, the kiss of heavenly love
Greeted me in the Sabbath's holy calm;
The full-toned bell pealed forth a mystic meaning;
And prayer raised sweet emotions in my heart.
A longing then, beyond expression sweet,
Impelled me forth to wander thorough woods
And plains; and, midst a thousand scalding tears,
I felt ideal worlds rise at my call.
This anthem was the harbinger of all
The hallowed joyousness, the gladsome sports,
The unchecked happiness of spring festivity.
With child-like feeling, memory restrains me
Now, from this final and decisive step.

Digitized by Google

Sound on, ye strains, celestial and prevailing!
Earth wins me back again, and warm tears flow.

CHORUS OF YOUNG DISCIPLES.

He whom the grave enclosed now reigns on high;
The heavens enshrine
His form divine;
He hath raised himself triumphantly!
In aye-encreasing bliss,
Near to creating joy he is:
And we are left for suffering here,
Upon the bleak earth's breast,
Thus struggling and unblest.
Master, we mourn thy fate, with many a tear.

CHORUS OF ANGELS.

From corruption's prison
Christ hath arisen.
Tear loose, with glad acclaim,
Your bonds of sin and shame,
Ye, who with brotherly affection strove;
Ye, who have manifested best your love;
Ye, who by deeds have fitly praised;
Ye, who have preached his hallowed name,
Unscared by persecution's flame;
He's near you; shout with glad acclaim!
For you hath he been raised.

Digitized by Google

BEFORE THE GATE.

PROMENADERS *of all classes pass out.*

SOME MECHANICS.

WHY that way?

OTHERS.

We are for the hunting-lodge.

THE FORMER.

And we for the mill.

A MECHANIC.

——I should recommend

The water-side.

A SECOND.

'Tis not a pleasant road.

THE OTHERS.

What will you do?

A THIRD.

I shall go with the rest.

A FOURTH.

Let's up to Burgsdorf; there we shall be sure
Of fine girls, and good beer, and lots of fun.

Digitized by Google

A FIFTH.

What, scamp! your skin still itching? I shan't go;
I always feel a horror of that place.

SERVANT GIRL.

No, no, indeed! I shall go back again.

ANOTHER.

We shall be sure to find him by those poplars.

THE FIRST.

And if we do, what benefit to me?
He will be sure to walk beside of you.
Only with you he dances on the green;
And what concern can I have with your pleasures?

THE SECOND.

But he will not be by himself today;
A certain lad with curly hair is with him.

STUDENT.

The deuce! how very fast they're stepping out!
Brother, come on! we *must* get up with them.
Strong beer, good tobacco, fine girls, for ever!
That's my taste now.

CITIZENS' DAUGHTERS.

Pretty fellows they are!
What a vile shame it is, when they might have
Their choice of proper company, to run
After such girls as that!

Digitized by Google

SECOND STUDENT (*to the first*).

Don't hurry so!

There are two lasses coming on behind us,
So nicely dressed, and one of them's my neighbour,
And an especial favourite of mine.
They're walking on in their shy quiet way,
But at last they'll let us join them, there's no fear.

THE FIRST.

No, brother, no! I hate the least restraint.
Come, quick! or we shall lose the real game.
The hand that twirls the mop on Saturday
On Sunday best will fondle you. Come! come!

CITIZEN.

No, no, indeed he's not at all to my mind,
This new Burgomaster; since he's become so.
He's daily growing more and more despotic.
And what's he doing, I should like to know,
For the town? *that's* getting daily worse and worse;
One must submit to more restraints than ever,
And pay at the same time more than ever, too.

BEGGAR (*sings*).

Worthy gentlemen, I pray,
Pity the poor beggar's lot!
Lovely ladies, on this day
Be not charity forgot!
Kind hearts, a trifle I implore;
Pity and relieve the poor.

Digitized by Google

'Tis a blessed day for you—
Many more such may you see—
Give me cause to bless it too.
Open-handed all must be
Who of light hearts would make sure.
Pity and relieve the poor!

ANOTHER TOWNSMAN.

I know of nothing half so entertaining,
On Sundays and on holidays like this,
As talking about wars and rumours of wars,
When the fighting's at some Turkish place behind us.
How pleasant 'tis, to sit here at the window,
Toss off one's glass, and see the painted vessels
Drop down the river; then, as evening closes,
One jogs quietly towards home content and happy,
And blesses peace and peaceful times like these.

THIRD TOWNSMAN.

To that I've not the least objection, neighbour.
They may break each other's heads that will for me,
In some far-off place, and turn all topsy-turvy,
Only let things at home stay as they are.

AN OLD WOMAN (*to the citizens' daughters*).

Hey day! how smart we are! what sweet young blood!
Who but would fall in love with you, I wonder?
Only not quite so proud, might be as well.
And what you wish for, I should know how, I guess,

Digitized by Google

To put you all in the right way of getting.

CITIZEN'S DAUGHTER.

Come along, Agatha! I'm always cautious
Not to be seen in public with such witches;
Though 'tis true she showed me, on St. Andrew's eve,
My future sweetheart to the very life.

THE OTHER.

And mine she showed me also, in the glass,
Like a soldier amongst other manly fellows;
I oft look round in search of him, but never
Can see him any where as yet.

SOLDIERS.

Towns with walls girded round
Fain would we win;
Maidens with beauty crowned,
Wealth, are therein.

Hark! the shrill trumpet's breath
Rending the air!
Cites it to joy or death
We know nor care.

Is not the charm of life
Reckless adventure?
Charging midst fields of strife,
Stormed gaps to enter?

Digitized by Google

So, towns with walls girded round
Let's on and win them!
Maidens with beauty crowned,
Wealth, are within them.

FAUST *and* WAGNER.

FAUST.

Freed by the quickening impulse of the spring,
The lately ice-bound streams rejoicing flow,
And joyous hope is budding in the vales;
Old winter in his dotage seeketh shelter
'Midst the bleak mountains, scattering in his flight
Nought but some feeble showers of half-thawed hail,
That melt at once on the green-springing meads;
For the sun endures no chilling whiteness now,
But sets the vegetable world astir;
Buds into leaves, seeds into plants unfold,
And soon he'll deck them in a thousand hues.
The landscape wants the adornment of gay flowers
Thus early, but their places are supplied
By people in their holiday attire.
Do look back on the town from this acclivity;
From the dark portal, what a motley crowd
Is streaming forth to sun themselves today!
They celebrate the rising of the Lord
With true delight, for they themselves have risen

Digitized by Google

From narrow rooms piled up 'neath sordid roofs,
From the dull bondage of mechanic toil,
From stifling labyrinths of lanes and alleys,
From the venerable gloom of Gothic churches—
To open cheerful daylight have they risen.
See, see! how quick the living mass disperses
Through gardens and green fields! the river, too,
Is tossing on its surface many a bark
Freighted with jovial company today:
Mark the last wherry as it pushes off,
Laden almost to sinking; every where,
Even on the furthest pathways of the hills,
Gay party-coloured dresses meet our glance.
And, from the buzz that meets my ear, we soon
Shall be amidst the bustle of a village;
The thronging and the shouting and the noise,
That form the multitude's true paradise;
Old folks and young huzzaing joyously.
Here I can feel, and own myself, a man.

WAGNER.

Doctor! it is both honour and advantage,
And I esteem it so, to walk with you;
But if alone I should not venture here,
For beyond all things I hate vulgar coarseness;
And fiddling, skittle-playing, and such like,
Are utterly detestable to me.

Digitized by Google

The clowns behave as if Old Nick possessed them,
And call it merriment, enjoyment, harmony!

PEASANTS (*around the Lime-tree*).

[*Dance and Song.*]

With holiday jacket and ribbons so gay
The swain decked himself for the dance;
Amidst the thronged circle he elbowed his way,
And for partners he trusted to chance.
Huzza! huzza! huzza!
To and fro how the fiddlesticks glance!

As he eagerly pushed right and left to get in,
He encountered a rosy-cheeked lass,
Who with two laughing eyes as provoking as sin,
Said, 'In rudeness I think you surpass.'
Huzza! huzza! huzza!
'Pray don't make yourself such an ass.'

But on went the dancing with spirit and glee,
Feet shifted and petticoats twirled,
In the ring that was formed round the old linden-tree,
By the merriest folks in the world.
Huzza! huzza! huzza!
By the happiest folks in the world.

Digitized by Google

Now tired and heated and all of a glow,
They rested themselves on the grass,
And our swain found himself at the feet of his foe,
The scolding and rosy-cheeked lass.
Huzza! huzza! huzza!
Need one marvel how that came to pass?

'You men are all faithless: be quiet, I say,
Don't plague me, you troublesome bore!'
But to prove his exception he coaxed her away, [fore.
Whilst the dance round the lime-tree went on as be-
Huzza! huzza! huzza!
And far and wide echoed the joyous uproar.

OLD PEASANT.

Why Doctor, this is really kind of you!
Although so deeply learned, you're not above
Taking an interest in our sports: pray drink
From our best jug, filled freshly with the best:
Here's my humble service—pray God bless you!
May it do more than merely quench your thirst;
May every drop add to your honoured days!

FAUST.

I thank you, friend, for this refreshing draught:
All health and happiness to you in turn.

Digitized by Google

The PEOPLE *come round him.*

OLD PEASANT.

'Tis as it should be, that you come amongst us
Upon this day of gladness, for you were
Our friend when evil days were vexing us.
There's many of us standing here alive
Your father rescued from the fever's rage,
When that he stayed the pestilence.
And you too, though you were but a young man,
Visited all the houses of the sick,
And tho' from out them many a corpse was brought,
Yet you remained unhurt, and did endure
Many a dreadful trial. But the great Helper
Above aided the helper here.

ALL.

Health and long life to our old and tried friend!
May it long be in his power to help!

FAUST.

Bend before Him on high who teaches how
To help, and sends his needful blessing with it.

[*He proceeds on with Wagner.*

WAGNER.

What feelings must be yours, respected Sir,
When you receive such homage from the people.
Happy the man who thus can turn his gifts

Digitized by Google

To good account! The father points you out
To his boy; all ask, all press around you;
Fiddles are stopped, the dancers make a pause;
As you go by, they range themselves in rows,
Fling caps in the air, and all but bend the knee,
As if the Host were passing.

FAUST.

To yon crag,
'Tis but a few steps more, and then we'll rest.
Here, lone and thoughtful, I have often sat,
And disciplined myself by prayer and fasting.
Here, rich in hope, and with undoubting faith,
I strove, with sighs and tears and wringing hands,
To turn the Lord of Heaven from his purpose,
And stay the pestilence. Now the people's praise
Sounds like a taunting mockery in my ears.
Ah! couldst thou read the inmost soul, and see
How little sire or son deserve such laud!
My worthy sire, a somewhat gloomy man,
With honest zeal, did after his own fashion
Seek, by fantastical experiments,
To wrest from nature her most hidden secrets.
Like other adepts of the alchemic school,
He shut himself up in his laboratory,
And passed his days in fusing contraries.
There, was the crimson lion, a bold lover,

Digitized by Google

To the lily wedded, in the tepid bath;
Then, from one bridal chamber to another,
They both were tortured by an open flame;
And if the young queen in the glass appeared
Of varied hues—it was the medicine sought.
The patients died, and none asked who recovered;
And thus did we, with this infernal mixture,
Rage in these vales and mountains worse by far
Than the pestilence. I myself have given
Poison to thousands; they have pined and died,
And I survive—to hear the murderers praised.

WAGNER.

How strange, to vex yourself about such things!
What more can be required of a good man,
Than to practise the art which he professes
With conscientious care? If to your sire
You are accustomed to look up in youth,
You gain his knowledge and adopt his views;
And if in riper manhood you attain
To juster views and more extended knowledge,
In the same way, and from the self-same cause,
Your son may reach a higher point than you.

FAUST.

Happy, thrice happy, who with buoyant mind
Still hopeth to emerge from error's sea!
Man ever strives for what he doth not know,

Digitized by Google

And what he doth know, knows not how to use.
But let us not with such perplexing thoughts
Disturb the blessing of an hour like this.
See how the cottages from verdant nooks
Gleam in the setting sun! See yon blue hill
Bending beneath his glory! Now he sinks—
Sinks gradual—the day is over-lived!
Away he glideth, quickening other life.
And I've no wing to lift me from the ground,
And bear my yearning spirit, on, on, on—
For ever after him! I should behold
The world, as now, a smiling paradise,
For ever at my feet! the hills on fire,
The lovely valleys cradled in repose,
The silver brooks blend with the golden river!
Yon savage mountain, with its torn ravines,
Would form no barrier to my godlike course.
Already open on my raptured sight,
The sea, and all the glowing shores it laves!
Now once again, the day-god glides away,
But the fresh kindling impulse urges on,
Still still to quaff his everlasting light,
The day before me and the night behind,
The heavens above me and the waves beneath.
Ah lovely dream! whilst passing he is gone.
Alas! we have no bodily wings to cope

Digitized by Google

With the quick-glancing pinions of the mind.
Yet 'tis our being's innate tendency
Upwards and onwards ever still to strive:
When o'er us, melting in the blue expanse,
The lark exulting sings; o'er pine-clad heights
When the eagle soars; and when o'er plain and sea
The crane plies onwards to his distant home.

WAGNER.

Why I myself have often had strange fancies,
But never yet an impulse of the kind.
One soon gets sated of mere woods and fields.
I never dreamt of envying birds their wings.
How different the enjoyments of the mind,
Leading from page to page, from book to book!
How cheerful do they make the winter nights,
Spreading a glowing warmth through all our frame.
But heaven itself pervades one's every sense
When one unrols some precious manuscript.

FAUST.

Of but one instinct thou, my friend, art conscious;
Ah, never court the acquaintance of the other!
Alas! two souls are struggling in my breast
To separate themselves from one another.
The one is clinging, as with hooks of steel,
With fond tenacious grasp unto the world;
The other, with majestic grace, would soar

Digitized by Google

To purer realms beyond this misty scene;
Seats of high ancestry it claims descent from.
Ye spirits—if there be such—ye that hover
In the viewless air, and rule 'twixt earth and heaven,
Oh! now from your own glowing sphere descend,
And bear me off to some diviner life.
Ah! could I call some magic mantle mine,
And could it bear me amidst untried scenes,
I'd prize it far beyond the costliest garments;
I would not change it for a monarch's robe.

WAGNER..

Invoke not, I implore, the beings of air,
Those elvish squadrons that, as quick as thought,
Capricious spread wherever it may list them,
Threatening mishap to man in countless forms:
From the bleak north, sharp-fanged and arrowy-tongued
They rush upon him; from the parching east,
To seize upon his lungs; from the south they come
With fevers and delirium of the brain;
The west pours forth a swarm that but refreshes
To drown his fields, his cattle, and himself.
Eves-droppers are they, ever bent on mischief,
Pleased to obey because pleased to delude,
They feign themselves from heaven and lisp like angels.
But pray let us be moving, for the scene

Digitized by Google

Is grey already, the air chill and misty!
Only when night approaches do we set
A proper value on our home.—But why
Stand you and gaze with such astonishment?
What do you see, that thus draws your attention
Amidst the gloaming?

FAUST.

Seest thou yon black dog
Skirmishing round us through the corn and stubble?

WAGNER.

I saw him long since: he did not strike me
As having aught peculiar.

FAUST.

Mark him well!
For what do you take the brute?

WAGNER.

For a poodle,
Poodle-like, nosing out his master's track.

FAUST.

But mark you how, in wide and spiral curves,
He courses round, nearer and nearer to us?
And, if I do not err, a whorl of fire
Follows upon his track.

WAGNER.

For my part I see merely a black poodle.
Some optical illusion must deceive you.

Digitized by Google

FAUST.

It does appear to me that he is drawing
Light magic nooses all around our path.

WAGNER.

I see him coursing round us timidly,
And hesitate, because he sees two strangers
Instead of his master.

FAUST.

The circle narrows—
He draws near—he's already close to us!

WAGNER.

It plainly is a dog, and not a spirit.
See—he pauses, whines, crouches on his belly,
And wags his tail, as dogs are wont to do.

FAUST.

Come hither, dog! hither, and go with us.

WAGNER.

It is nothing but a poor stray poodle dog.
If you stand still he'll sit up; if you speak,
He'll jump against you, and whisk round and round;
Had you lost aught he would find and bring it you,
Or jump into the water for your stick.

FAUST.

You're right: there are no traces of a spirit,
And all is merely the result of training.

Digitized by Google

WAGNER.

Even the wisest may become attached
To a well-bred dog; and he'll deserve, I doubt not,
Whate'er of favour you bestow on him—
Apt pupil, as he is, of two such students.

[*They enter the town gate.*

Digitized by Google

STUDY.

FAUST, *entering with the Poodle.*

FAUST.

I've left a glorious landscape veiled in night—
Deep night—that wakes in us the better soul,
With its presentiments of holy awe.
Now slumber in their lair—the human breast—
Those earth-born, selfish, grovelling desires,
The parents of so many violent deeds:
Love only stirs there, love of man—of God.
Be quiet, poodle! don't run to and fro so!
What are you sniffing at beneath the door?
There's my best cushion—lie down by the stove.
As you amused us with your freaks and gambols
Upon the mountain path, so now receive
My proffered kindness, as a quiet guest.
Ah, when night's husht and blessed reign returns,
And the trimmed lamp again burns genially,
How the thoughts brighten in self-studying hearts!
Then reason 'gins to plead, hope to re-bloom;
Then for life's purer fountains do we yearn,

Digitized by Google

Yea, for the far-off sources of our being.
Don't growl so, poodle! that vile currish sound
In no way harmonizes with those tones
To which my soul is wholly now attuned.
To scoff at what they do not understand,
To turn to mockery the good, the beautiful,
So often uncongenial to their nature,
With men I know 's an every-day event.
Is the dog snarling at it, too, like them?
But ah! I feel, even in the kindliest mood,
Content no longer wells up in my breast.
Ah! wherefore should this spring fail us so soon,
And leave our parched souls thirstier than before?
But I have now experienced that full oft,
And the deficiency may be supplied.
It makes one value what is not of earth
More justly, makes one long for revelation;
And where burns this so purely and so bright
As in the Christian's charter—the New Testament?
I feel impelled to ope the original text,
And to translate from it, with strict integrity,
A portion into my beloved German.

[*He opens a volume and prepares himself to do so.*

'Tis written: 'In the beginning was the WORD.'
Word—word? I am at fault already;
I cannot value the mere word so highly;

Digitized by Google

I must translate it differently from this,
If by the spirit I'm indeed inspired.
'Tis written: 'In the beginning was the MIND.'
Let this initial line be well considered:
Let me not be o'er-hasty with the pen.
Are all things then produced and swayed by mind?
Try thus, 'In the beginning was the POWER.'
Yet, in the act of setting down that word,
There's something warns me that it will not do.
At length the spirit aids! I see my way
Clearly, and write with ready confidence:
'In the beginning was the DEED.'——
Poodle!
If you're to be allowed to share my chamber,
You must not howl so, you must not keep barking;
I can't have such a troublesome companion.
'Tis past endurance! either you or I
Must quit the cell—though I withdraw from you
My hospitality with some reluctance.
There, the door's open, the way clear for you.
But what do I behold? Comes this to pass
By natural means? Is't shadow? is't reality?
How long, how broad the poodle grows,—expands,
Raises, exalts himself, with wondrous power!
Surely 'tis not a dog's, that monstrous form!
What! have I brought a spectre to my house?

Digitized by Google

He looks already like a huge behemoth,
With fiery eyes and most terrific jaws.
Ah! now of thy true nature I am sure!
Solomon's key 's for thy half-hellish sort.

SPIRITS (*in the passage*).

There's one caught within,
Like a fox in a gin;
An old lynx of hell
Quakes in the cell.
He must be freed,
But take heed, take heed
How we proceed!
Up and down, to and fro,
Around let us go.
Fly thither, fly back
To his aid, don't be slack.
He hath done us good service, you know.

FAUST.

This unearthly beast to quell,
Weave I now the four-fold spell:
Salamander shall glow,
And Undine shall flow,
And Sylph shall invisible grow,
And Kobold
Shall be roused from his hold.

Digitized by Google

No mastery
O'er spirits hath he
Who knows not the power
Of the elements four.

Salamander, vanish in flame!
Rushingly blend, Undine!
Sylph, like a beautiful meteor gleam!
Incubus! Incubus!
Bring thy help—and thus
Complete is the spell, I proclaim.

None of the four
Can pierce his skin
Undisturbed as before
Doth he lie and grin.
I must compel
By a stronger spell.

Art thou
A scapeling from hell's dark confine?
Behold the sign
To which the fiendish legions bow!
Now he is swelling, his hair bristles now!
Reprobate!
Dost thou appreciate

Digitized by Google

His mighty spell?
The Underived, the Unpronounceable,
The All-diffused, who gave the heavens birth;
He who became,
And suffered shame,
Incarnate in the human form on earth.

I've driven him behind the stove, and now
Like a huge elephant his form dilates;
The room fills with him—he'll dissolve in mist.
But ascend not to the roof! Down, down
At thy master's feet! Thou find'st mine no vain threat.
With holy fire I'll scorch thee! Bide thou not
For the thrice glowing flame—my strongest spell!

MEPHISTOPHELES, *as the mist sinks, comes forward from behind the stove, clothed like a travelling scholar.*

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Why such alarm? What may your pleasure be?

FAUST.

So this then is the kernel of the poodle!
A travelling student? The *casus* makes me laugh.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

I salute your very learned worship!
You've made me sweat uncommonly.

FAUST.

Your name?

Digitized by Google

MEPHISTOPHELES.

The question strikes me to be very petty,
Coming from one who scorns the Word so much;
One who, despising all that's mere appearance,
Seeketh to probe the essential depths of Being.

FAUST.

Amongst such gentlemen as you, the name
Indicates very commonly the essence;
As shown too obviously, should it be Fly-God,
Spoiler, Liar: and so, once more, who art thou?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

A portion of that power which is ever
Devising evil and producing good.

FAUST.

But how am I to construe this enigma?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

I am the spirit who denieth constantly,
And rightly too: for nothing is produced
That had not better be reduced to nothing;
Therefore if nought existed 'twould be better.
And so what you call sin, destruction, EVIL,
Doth constitute my proper element.

FAUST.

You stand here whole, yet call yourself a part.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

I tell the modest truth. It is for man—

Digitized by Google

Folly's microcosm—to deem himself a whole.
A part of that part which in the beginning
Was all in all; a portion of the darkness
Which brought forth light, am I; the haughty Lig.
Who now contesteth with old mother Night
Her ancient rank and space, but ineffectively:
He cleaves to bodies, struggle as he will,
He flows from bodies, he gives bodies beauty,
By bodies is impeded in his course;
And so, ere long, with bodies may he perish!

FAUST.

Now I perceive thy dignified vocation!
Wholesale destruction is beyond thy means,
So thou attempt'st it on a smaller scale.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

And, if the truth must out, with small success. [thing,
This clumsy world, this something matched 'gainst no-
I've often tried my hand at—with deluges,
With earthquakes, tempests, fires—without effect;
Both sea and land remain, upon the whole,
Much as they were; so, too, the cursed vitality
Of man and brutes—the litter that inhabit it.
How many myriads have I buried! yet
Fresh blood still flows, through still renewing forms.
It really is enough to drive one mad
To find things will go on! From earth, air, water—

Digitized by Google

In dry, cold, wet, hot—germs evolve by millions!
Nought could I call my own peculiarly,
Had I not made of fire a reservation.

FAUST.

So you impotently clench your demon fist,
Do you, to spar 'gainst the creative power,
The ever-active and beneficent?
Attempt what's less absurd, strange child of chaos.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

We will advise on't—more of that anon.
Have I permission now to take my leave?

FAUST.

I can perceive no reason for your question.
Now we have made acquaintance, call on me
At any time, whene'er you feel inclined.
There is the door-way, and the window there:
I have besides a chimney at your service.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

To say the truth, a trifling obstacle
Prevents my going—the goblin foot on your threshold.

FAUST.

Indeed! the pentagram perplexes you?
Tell me then, child of hell, if 't has such power,
How you entered? how such a spirit could be caught?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

'Tis incorrectly drawn: one of the angles,

Digitized by Google

The outward one, you see, opens a little.

FAUST.

A lucky accident! a chance-hit, faith!
Then thou shouldst be my prisoner?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

The poodle
Sprung o'er the sill and took no notice on't:
The thing assumes a different aspect now:
The Devil can't get out.

FAUST.

Why not? There's the window.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

'Tis a law binding upon ghosts and devils
That they must go by the same road they came:
As to the one we're free, to the other slaves.

FAUST.

Then hell itself has laws! I'm glad 'tis so,
Because a binding compact may be made
With you dark gentlemen?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

To the very letter,
Thou shalt enjoy whate'er thou mayst be promised;
Not the least deduction shall be made from it.
But this is not for instant comprehension:
We'll speak of it again, when next we meet.
Let me go now I earnestly entreat you.

Digitized by Google

FAUST.

Stay, till you've told me something worth the telling.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Pray let me go now! Shortly I'll return,
Then you may question me as you think fit.

FAUST.

I laid no snare: quite of your own accord
You ran into the net. Who has got hold
Of the Devil, should keep hold; for he's not caught
A second time so easily, I guess.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

If, then, you really wish my stay, so be it;
But upon one condition—that I've leave
To use my arts in beguiling time for you.

FAUST.

You have my leave: I wish it to be done—
Provided always that 'tis something pleasant.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Pleasant! you'll gratify your senses more
In one short hour, with me, than you can do
In the whole monotonous year you pass besides.
The strains my delicate sprites will sing to you,
The lovely images they'll bring before you,
Will not be magic's unsubstantial play.
Sweet odours will delight your sense of smell,
Dainties your palate, and delicious scenes

Digitized by Google

Will feast your sight. There needs no preparation:
We are all assembled. Spirits, strike up!

SPIRITS.

Disappear, dark vaulted ceiling!
It fades! lo, the heaven's dome! revealing
Where the bright stars sparkle, where
Black clouds melt in subtle air,
Where ethereal beauty teems!
Hither, on your tremulous beams,
Fair worlds! hither, with each ray,
Send yearnings for the far away.

Now light o'er the scenery hovers
In emerald garb festooned with flowers,
And with beauty all things covers;
Hills and dales, and leafy bowers
'Neath whose intertangled boughs
Lovers change life-lasting vows;
Covers many a green arcade,
Many a labyrinth of shade
Where, in many a spiral ring,
Tendrils round the firm boughs cling,
The broad-leaved vine's glad load to bear
Of clustering rubies pendent there.
See them from the wine-press gushing!
See them in a bright stream rushing!

Digitized by Google

Flashing, sparkling, on it foams
Over beds of precious stones;
Onward it pursues its course,
Ever further from its source,
Till the vine-clad heights, as on it hies,
Blend with the purple of the skies;
Till it widens to a sea.
On! the winged Desires rush on,
To those enchanted isles
Where endless summer smiles,
Bright favourites of the sun.
Hark! what soft delicíous strains
Are breathing from their smiling plains!
The glad harmony
Some with choral voice are joining,
Some in graceful dance are twining,
Some on verdant slopes reclining,
Some in shady coverts courting,
Some amid the blue waves sporting,
Some are floating in mid-air,
Hovering light as zephyrs there.

Onward once again they stray,
On, in some ideal chase
Of worlds that teem with joy and grace;
Onward, to the far away.

Digitized by Google

MEPHISTOPHELES.

He slumbers! 'Tis well done, my airy spirits!
You've sung him to repose; and for this concert
I am your debtor. Still with fleeting visions
Play round him; plunge him in illusion's sea.
Thou the man, indeed, to hold the Devil fast!—
But now I am in want of a rat's tooth
To break the threshold's spell. So said so done:
I hear one rustling hitherward already
That will obey my mandate in a trice.
The lord of rats, mice, frogs, flies, bugs, and lice,
Commands thee to come forth and gnaw the threshold,
Upon the part which he has smeared with oil.
'Tis well thou skipp'st forth promptly! to the work!
That on the ledge towards the front's the point
That repelled me: one bite more, and 'tis done.
Now, Doctor, dream on, till we meet again.

FAUST (*waking*).

And am I then once more illusion's dupe?
Do the sprites vanish thus? Was't a lying dream
That the Devil appeared to me? and was't
A poodle that I saw whisking away?

Digitized by Google

STUDY.

FAUST, MEPHISTOPHELES.

FAUST.

Do I hear a knock at the door? Come in!
Plague on it! who must needs disturb me now?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

'Tis I.

FAUST.

Come in!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

You must say so three times.

FAUST.

Then I repeat, come in!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

So far, so good.
I trust we shall agree, seeing that I
Present myself—to obviate idle crotchets—
In the semblance of a youngster of condition,
With gold-laced scarlet coat and stiff silk mantle,
Cock's feather in my hat, and at my side

Digitized by Google

A long and pointed rapier; in good sooth—
Not to be prosy—I am come to advise you
To dress yourself forthwith in the same fashion,
That, unrestrain'd, you may prove what real life is.

FAUST.

Whatever dress I put on, I shall feel
The torture of this earth's contracted life.
I'm too old for mere frolic, and too young
To be without the promptings of desire.
What has the world to offer? This thou must want,
Thou must abstain from that, 's the eternal song
Dinned in the ears of every human being,
That every hour doth croak to us through life.
I wake at morn but to renewing horror;
I could fain shed bitter tears to see the day
That in its course I know will not accomplish
A single wish of mine—not one; alas!
So far from this, with spiteful waywardness,
It palsies each presentiment of joy,
And the creations of my active mind
Disturbs by a swarm of life's vexatious trifles;
And, worn and jaded, when night sinks o'er earth,
Stretcht on my couch, I find that rest's denied me;
That without fail I'm harrassed by wild dreams.
The god that dwells in my breast, that sways my energies,
That, when he lists, can stir its inmost depths,

Digitized by Google

He hath no influence o'er external things.
And thus to me existence is a load,
Death a wished-for object, life detestable.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Yet death's a guest never entirely welcome.

FAUST.

Happy the man around whose brow he wreathes
The blood-stained laurel 'midst the shouts of victory;
Whom, when the maddening dance is done, he finds
Cradled in beauty's arms. Oh, had I sunk,
Enraptured, lifeless, 'neath the High Spirit's power!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

And yet a certain person did not drink
A certain brown juice, on the night in question.

FAUST.

It is your pleasure, then, to play the spy.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

I am not omniscient, yet much is known to me.

FAUST.

Because those sweet familiar sounds o'ercame me,
And took me from the grasp of thronging horrors,
By playing in accordant symphony
With what of childhood's feelings I had left:
I now pronounce my deep curse upon all
That, with blinding and alluring influence,
Weave their vile juggling snares around the soul,

Digitized by Google

And bind it to this miserable den.
First and especially accurst be all
Those lofty aspirations, which the mind
Forms round her as an atmosphere to exist in!
Accurst be all external shows that blind
And enslave the senses! Accurst be the dreams
That cheat with hopes of fame! Accurst be all
That tempts us, in the shape of property,
To prize aught as peculiarly our own,
Be it wife, child, slave, or heritage!
Accurst be Mammon, in whatever mode
He stirs the passions by his sordid pelf,
Or if he marshal on to daring deeds,
Or if he spread the couch for sensual pleasure!
Accursed be the grape's balsamic juice!
Accursed be the extasy of love!
Accurst be hope! accurst be faith! accurst—
Yea, even beyond all—I curse thee, patience!

CHORUS OF SPIRITS (*invisible*).

Woe! woe!
That wilful blow
The crystal sphere hath quite destroyed!
A demi-god hath shattered, in despair,
That world so fair,
Whose fragmentary wreck we bear
Into the primal void!

Digitized by Google

Oh, raise a funeral wail
O'er loveliness too frail!

Thou, who amongst the sons of earth
Art strong in mental power,
Give to the beautiful new birth;
Again within thy bosom rear hope's bower.
With sense unstain'd and clear
Begin a new career;
So shall there peal forth a diviner lay,
Merry as bells upon a festal day.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

These, the noviciates of my train,
Sagacious spirits though so young,
To act, and to enjoy, would fain
Allure you midst the human throng.
Be not their counsel breathed in vain!
Leave solitude—your choice so long,
Where stagnate the senses and the sap of life—
And sally forth 'midst the world's exciting strife.
Cease trifling with the vulture misery,
That preys upon the bosom where 'tis cherisht.
The worst society will make you feel
That you're a man amongst your fellow men.
Not that I'd drag you 'mongst the common herd:

Digitized by Google

Nor am I of the great ones of the earth;
But at your service as a life companion,
Or, if it please you, as your drudge, your slave.

FAUST.

And what return am I to make for this?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

As to that point you still have a long grace.

FAUST.

No, no! the Devil is an egotist,
Selfish, and doing nought for others' benefit,
Indifferently, or for the sake of God.
So let's have the condition plainly stated:
Servants like you bring peril to a house.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

I'll bind myself, with sleepless zeal to execute
Your wishes and commands at all times—HERE:
When we meet on THE OTHER SIDE life's confine,
You shall do as much for me.

FAUST.

I care nought
About the other side; when this world 's a wreck,
The other may succeed it, if it will.
From this earth all my joys originate,
And 'tis this sun that shines on all my sufferings;
If I can but separate myself from them,
Whatever will or can may come to pass;

Digitized by Google

I do not wish to hear a word about it.
If in the other world folks love and hate,
If they've an above and below—all's one to me.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

This is the mood to venture in: bind yourself;
And through this life I'll task my skill to please you;
I'll give you what man never yet possessed.

FAUST.

And what, poor Devil, may'st thou have to give?
Was the high aspiring spirit—the mind of man—
E'er fathom'd by a being of thy sort?
But may be thou hast food that never gluts,
Red gold that glides from the hand like quicksilver,
Some game of chance at which one never wins,
Some maid who, ev'n whilst folded in one's arms,
Is casting amorous glances at one's neighbour;
Some god-like honour, vanishing like a star-shot.
Show me the fruit that rots ere it be pluckt,
And the trees renewing aye their vernal beauty.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Such task as this not in the least affrights me:
The treasures named I have at my disposal.
But, friend, a time will come, in its due course,
To feast contentedly on what's really good.

FAUST.

If e'er I lie down on the couch of idleness

Digitized by Google

In calm composure—let life end at once!
If thou canst ever into self-complacence
By any art delude me; if thou canst
Ever contrive to cheat me by enjoyment,
Be that my last hour! Wilt accept the wager?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Done!

FAUST.

Your hand on't! If to the passing moment
I e'er say, Tarry, thou art so delightful!
Then I am yours; then will I readily perish;
Then let the death-bell toll, thy service cease,
The clock stand still, the index-hand fall down;
Let time have no more reference to me!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Weigh this maturely: it will be remembered.

FAUST.

You have a perfect right: bear it in mind.
I have formed no rash or sudden estimate
Of myself. Even now I am a slave;
And what care I, if thine or if another's.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

This very day at your inaugural feast
I commence duty. There needs nothing more—
Save, to prevent mistake or accident,
A line or two in writing from your hand.

Digitized by Google

FAUST.

What, thou a pedant too, requiring writing?
Of man, and of his word, hast no experience?
Is't not enough that I, by word of mouth,
Dispose of all my interest in eternity?
Whirrs not the world onward, in all its currents,
And why should I be held back by a promise?
Yet in our hearts this prejudice is rooted,
And who of his free choice would pluck it out?
He is a happy man within whose breast
Unsullied truth is shrined; he hath no cause,
No cause he ever will have, to repent
Whatever sacrifice he may consent to.
But a parchment, with its writing and its seal,
Is a dread yellow spectre that all shrink from;
The word dissolving promptly from the pen
To skin and wax transfers enduring power.
Spirit of Evil, which dost thou require,
Brass, marble, parchment, paper? Shall I use
The graver or the pen? Thou'st but to state
To which thou giv'st the preference.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

How absurd,
To o'erheat yourself and waste your eloquence
About such trifles! Any scrap will serve:
But with a drop of blood you'll please to sign it.

Digitized by Google

FAUST.

If that is all, the whim shall be complied with.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Why blood you see 's quite a peculiar juice.

FAUST.

You need not fear that I shall break this compact.
That which I promise is the very thing
To gain which all my energies are striving.
I have aspired too high: I but belong
To thy grade. The Great Spirit hath spurned me, and denies
Access to nature. The links of thought are sever'd;
Knowledge of every kind I long have loathed.
Let's still the glowing passions in the depths
Of sensuality! Let every marvel
Hid by the impenetrable veil of magic
Be instantly prepared! Let's cast ourselves
Midst the rush of time, the rolling waves of event!
There joy and pain, vexation and success,
May alternate with each other as they will:
Man is ever restless, must be ever doing.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Nor bounds nor measure is prescribed to you.
If to snatch at every object as you pass;
If a hasty sip of all things be your wish;
Fall to at once without timidity.

Digitized by Google

FAUST.

I tell thee once more, pleasure's not the question:
I state again, that I devote myself
Unto excitement's most delirious whirl;
Joy stretched to agony, intensest hate,
The ague fits—the fever—of vexation.
Henceforth my breast, relieved of the load of knowledge,
Shall bare itself to every pang; shall vibrate
To its inmost depths with the whole collectively
That is portion'd out amongst mankind in fragments.
I will in spirit share the inmost feelings
Of the powerful, the profound,
The high, the low, the virtuous, the vile;
The weal and woe of all the human race
I will accumulate within myself,
And thus dilate, and render co-extensive
With theirs, my own individuality,
And be extinguisht in the end like them.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Harken to one who many thousand years
Hath chewed the cud on this hard nutriment:
No mortal, 'twixt his cradle and his bier,
The ancient leaven ever yet digested.
Trust one of us—this whole is only made
For a God. *He* exists in eternal brightness,
Us He decrees to dwell in constant darkness,
And *you*—where day and night are, is your sphere.

Digitized by Google

FAUST.

But I will.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

That may be well enough to say!
There is but one thing that perplexes me:
Time is short, art long: but you're open to conviction;
Engage a poet as your chamber-council,
And put him on his mettle to concentrate
All noble qualities in your honoured self;
Let him rack his brains to obtain that precious secret,
How to blend, with grace and strict congruity,
The lion's courage, the swiftness of the stag;
The Italian's fiery blood, and the North's firmness;
Cunning with magnanimity; the burning
Impetuous impulses of youthful love,
With systematic prudence and morality.
Why even I should like to scrape acquaintance
With such an unique. I'd dub him my Lord Microcosm.

FAUST.

What then am I, if 'tis not possible
To attain, though every sense doth strive for't,
Even the crown of mere humanity?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

You are at the end—exactly what you are.
You may wear a periwig with countless curls,
Or mount on six-feet stilts: 'tis all the same,
You're but your poor original self at last.

Digitized by Google

FAUST.

I feel 'tis so. In vain I've scraped together
The rich results of every human mind,
And hived them in my bosom: no new power
Or faculty springs up within me.
I find, on resting from the accomplisht toil,
I'm not a hair's breadth nearer to the infinite.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Well, my good Sir, you see things, I assure you,
Precisely in their ordinary dress.
Henceforward we must manage matters better,
Or we shall let life's joys slip through our fingers.
What the deuce! have you not hands, feet, head, and —?
And does not all that's enjoyed with zest and spirit
Become one's own? If I've the means to pay
For half a dozen steeds, their powers are mine;
I dash along, and am as right a man
As if I had twenty-four such legs myself.
At once and promptly then, have done with study,
And off into the busy world with me!
A speculative student in his closet
Is like a poor brute on a barren heath,
Betwixt whom and the verdant pastures round
A barrier's drawn impervious to his senses,
Whilst ever round and round the unseen fence
An evil spirit goads him.

Digitized by Google

FAUST.

Well, but how

Are we to set about it?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

By stepping forth

Out of this place of lingering martyrdom.

What a precious mode of spending life it is,

Wearying one's self to death, and stupifying

Successive sets of young and ardent minds!

Pray leave all this to Doctor Paunch, your neighbour.

Why plague yourself with thrashing well-thumped straw?

The cream, the gist, of what you really know,

You dare not tell the youngsters. Hark! there's one

In the passage.

FAUST.

'Tis impossible I should see him.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

'Twere pity the poor boy should lose his labour,

And go away disconsolate. Allow me

Your cap and gown: this masquerading dress

Is sure to fit me with becoming grace.

[*He puts on the dress.*

Now trust my wit: ten minutes will suffice;

Whilst you, meantime, get ready for our trip.

[*Exit Faust.*

Digitized by Google

MEPHISTOPHELES, *in Faust's long robe.*

Only despise humanity's strong-holds,
Reason and knowledge; only permit thyself
To be confirmed in sorcery and delusion
By the fine tact of the Great Spirit of Lies,
And thou art unconditionally mine.——
Fate has bestowed on him an eager, proud,
Uncurbable spirit, that doth over-leap
The joys of earth; so I'm resolved to drag him
Through the vapid, dreary, unidea'd wastes
Of common life; he shall hesitate, stare,
Pause, with unrefresht, unsated appetite;
Grasp sensual joys with child-like eagerness,
Whilst they elude him like the fabled cup;
So, were he not already, by a bond,
The Devil's, he'd infallibly be lost.

A SCHOLAR *enters.*

SCHOLAR.

I am but just arrived; and come at once
To pay my homage to the man whom all
Agree to honour.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

This proof of attention
Claims my fitting thanks. You see a person
Much like other folks. Then you have not yet
Had time to look round and arrange your plans?

Digitized by Google

STUDENT.

Do Sir, I pray you, interest yourself
On my behalf! I've come with good resolves,
Some little money, and a stock of spirits.
I had hard work to get my mother's leave
To be so long, so far, away from her:
But I would fain learn every thing worth knowing.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

You're in the very place for't, my young friend.

STUDENT.

To tell the honest truth, I should feel glad
If I were out of it once more: these halls,
These walled enclosures, do not suit me;
The space is so exceedingly confined;
Not a tree, not a bit of green turf to be seen:
And when I'm seated 'midst those tiers of benches,
I'm so bewildered, sight and hearing fail me.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Habit will set this right: a child at first
May not take kindly to the mother's breast,
But soon gets pleased at nourishing itself.
Just so you'll feel a daily growing pleasure
At sucking nourishment from wisdom's bosom.

STUDENT.

How fondly I shall hang upon her neck!
Do, pray Sir, tell me how I can attain it.

Digitized by Google

MEPHISTOPHELES.

And what profession, now, may you have fix'd on?

STUDENT.

I'm anxious, Sir, to be profoundly learned:
I wish to comprehend both art and nature;
The earthly and celestial sciences.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

I see you are on the right track—with proviso
You don't let your attention be distracted
By so many objects tempting your pursuit
At once.

STUDENT.

I'm heart and soul in the cause:—
Though to be sure a little relaxation,
On a bright sunshine holiday, now and then,
Might not be wholly unacceptable.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

You must make the most of time, it glides so fast;
But method may be said to gain by saving it.
This reason, my young friend, makes me advise
That you enter on a course of college logic:
By studying this the mind gets well broke in,
So that it steps along the path of thought
Laced up in Spanish boots, as one may say,
Steadily, and without the risk of starting
Hither and thither, any way but the right,

Digitized by Google

Like a Will-o'-the-wisp. This plan resolved on,
Many a toilsome day must be spent to teach you,
That one, two, three, distinct and different efforts
Should gain what you once hit off at a blow,
With instinctive ease. Thought's fabrications
Are formed like tapestry in the weaver's loom:
One foot-board puts a thousand lines in motion,
Whilst from swift shuttles, gliding to and fro,
Threads flow unseen, and form at every instant
A countless host of interweaving ties.
Your philosophic master then steps forward,
And clearly proves it could not choose but be so;
Thus would the first be, and the second thus,
Thus therefore must the third and the fourth be;
Showing, if 'twere not for the first and second,
That the third and fourth never would exist.
The scholars of all countries prize this highly,
Though none turn weavers doing what they explain.
Next you must learn the scientific way
Of studying and describing living things:
Vitality has first to be destroyed,
Then all the different parts are manageable,
Though to be sure the spiritual bond is wanting.
ENCHEIRESIN NATURÆ—that's the term
Chemistry gives it, and thus mocks herself
Unconsciously.

Digitized by Google

STUDENT.

I don't quite understand you.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

In that respect you'll very soon improve,
When you learn to classify and to reduce.

STUDENT.

Dear me! I'm so confounded by it all,
'Tis like a smoke-jack twirling in my head.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

In the next place: above all other things,
You must grapple earnestly with metaphysics.
Be sure you get the most profound perception
Of what has never passed through human brains:
A sounding phrase will serve to represent
What does, or does not, penetrate to yours.
And, for the first half year at least, pray mind
To attend five lectures daily, without fail;
Be punctual as the clock at each of them,
And go with all the paragraphs prepared
And conn'd before, to enable you to see
The lecturer does not deviate from his book;
But at the same time write away as hard
As if the Holy Ghost dictated to you.

STUDENT.

You need not tell me that a second time:
I can imagine how extremely useful

Digitized by Google

'Tis. Yes, yes; what one has in black and white
One can carry home in comfort and security.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

But really, though, you must choose a profession!

STUDENT.

I cannot bring my mind to jurisprudence.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Nor can I greatly blame you on that score,
Knowing so well the nature of the science.
Like inveterate diseases, laws descend
Down from one generation to another,
And spread insensibly from place to place.
Reason becomes nonsense; beneficence a plague.
Woe's thee, that thou'rt a grandson! the obligations
That birth, alas! entails cannot be questioned.

STUDENT.

You increase my repugnance. Happy the pupils
Whom you instruct! I've thought of theology.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

I've no wish to mislead you, be assured;
But in the last-named science, to avoid
Erroneous doctrines is so very difficult;
There's so much secret poison lurking in it,
Which one can scarce distinguish from the medicine.
In this, as in the others, I advise
To attend one master only, and to hold

Digitized by Google

All that he says as gospel; and, in fact,
Be guided, as a general rule, by words,
Then by a safe road you will reach Faith's temple.

STUDENT.

But then each word must have annext to it
Some proper meaning.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Right! but one must not
Be over-anxious about that, because
Precisely at the point where meaning fails
'Tis that a word comes in most opportunely.
Disputes are admirably carried on
By words; a system may be built with words;
Words form the best materials for a creed;
From a word not one iota can be taken.

STUDENT.

Your pardon for my long obtrusion, pray;
But I must venture on one more request:
Would you but be so kind, respecting medicine,
As give a hint or two for my instruction?
God knows the field of knowledge is so vast,
And three years is so very short a time—
But with a hint one feels one's way on further.

MEPHISTOPHELES (*aside*).

I begin to weary of the prosing style:
I'll act in proper character again. [*Aloud.*

Digitized by Google

The essential part of medicine's soon got at.
The great world and the little world are studied
Merely to let things go on, after all,
As it pleases God. When you mix with life,
You'll find the scientific lumber useless.
'Tis folly to expect folks will learn more
Than they can learn; and he who best chimes in
With the humour and the notions of the day
Is the most popular and successful man.
You have a passable figure, and won't want
Boldness: so put confidence in yourself,
Then others will be sure to do so too.
But above all, devote your best attention
To the most effective way of treating women:
All their disorders—nervousness, vapours,
Languor, hysterics, and what not, so very
Interesting, so very various—are
To be cured, remember, from a single point.
Mind too, a grave and self-collected air,
And learned title, are essential things
To convince them of the great superiority
Of your art. You've won them then, and at once
A host of little privileges are granted
That others toil for years without obtaining:
Then you may feel the pulse with delicate warmth;
Then without scruple clasp the tender waist,

Digitized by Google

To assure yourself the lacing's not too tight.

STUDENT.

There is plain sense in that, at any rate!
In that, one sees the wherefore and the how.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Grey is all theory, my youthful friend;
The golden tree of life, all green and cheerful.

STUDENT.

I vow all this is as a dream to me.
Might I hope to be allowed, some future day,
To hear the grounds of what your wisdom states?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Willing to serve you, far as I have power,
You'll ever find me.

STUDENT.

'Tis impossible
To take leave, without striving to obtain
Some slight memorial of the honour done me,
In my commonplace book: I trust you'll grant me
This token of your favour.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Most readily.

[*He writes and gives it back.*]

STUDENT (*reads*).

ERITIS SICUT DEUS, SCIENTES BONUM ET MALUM.

[*He closes the book reverentially, and takes leave.*

Digitized by Google

MEPHISTOPHELES.

But follow that old saying, and my cousin
The ancient serpent; then, sooner or later,
You, with your likeness to the Deity,
Will need no admonition to repentance.

FAUST (*enters*).

Now then, what course shall we take?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

The choice is yours.
Let 's see the small world first, and then the great one.
How joyously you 'll revel through the course!

FAUST.

But with my beard, and want of easy manners,
I shall be sure to fail in the attempt.
I never had the slightest notion how
To accommodate myself to forms and customs;
I feel myself such a nobody, as 'twere,
Amongst those who 're accustomed to the world;
I shall be very awkward and embarrassed.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

My friend, all that will come of its own accord.
The instant you feel confidence in yourself,
You 've the whole secret of the art of life.

FAUST.

But how do you propose that we should start?
Where are our horses, chariot, and servants?

Digitized by Google

MEPHISTOPHELES.

We've nothing more to do than spread the mantle,
That will suffice to bear us buoyantly on.
Only be sure you take no earthly lumber
To cumber us on this bold spiritual trip.
  Lo! I make the inflammable gas: prepare
  To be off in a whiff through the yielding air;
  If our spirits are buoyant enough to fly,
  We shall mount rapidly up through the sky.
Doctor, of your new course I give you joy.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

AUERBACH'S CELLAR IN LEIPSIC.

CLUB *of* JOVIAL FELLOWS.

FROSCH.

WHAT, will none of you drink? none of you laugh?
I'll set you all a-grinning, I'll be bound.
At times you're all ablaze, now you're like wet straw.

BRANDER.

'Tis all your fault: you contribute nought towards it;
No nonsense, no dirty tricks.

FROSCH (*throws a glass of wine over his head*).

There's both for you.

BRANDER.

You beastly pig!

FROSCH.

You asked me to be so.

SIEBEL.

To doors with quarrellers! Drink boys! shout boys!
Sing with open hearts in chorus, Hurra!

ALTMAYER. [ears.

Zounds! I am stunned! Some wool! the man splits my

Digitized by Google

SIEBEL.

'Tis only when the vault rings back the sound
That one enjoys the true force of the bass.

FROSCH.

That's right; turn out all grumblers! Tol de rol!

ALTMAYER.

Tol de rol lol!

FROSCH.

Now then our pipes are tuned.

[*Sings.*]

The dear old Holy Romish State,
How it hangs together still!

BRANDER.

Psha! bad song! political song! hateful song!
Thank the Lord, every morning of your life,
You have not the Romish government on your head!
I always bless my stars, to think I'm not
An emperor, or a councillor of state—
Though there's no going on without a head:
Let's choose a pope; you know—ahem—the qualities
That decide such points, and elevate the man.

FROSCH (*sings*).

Up, and away! sweet nightingale,
Take to my sweetheart her lover's tale!
Give her ten thousand greetings for me.

Digitized by Google

SIEBEL.

No greetings to sweethearts! I won't hear such stuff.

FROSCH.

Greetings to sweethearts! aye, and kissings too!
I say you shan't prevent my singing it.

[*Sings.*]

Away, to my lady's chamber hie;
Sing till the charm'd bolts open fly;
And, till the morn dawns, sweetly plead for me.

SIEBEL.

Aye, sing, sing away! praise her to the skies.
The laugh will be on my side before long.
She first took me in; she'll take you in next.
May Kobold be her lover—that's my wish!
May the goblin court her in a four-cross-way.
May an old he-goat, upon the trot from Blocksberg,
Trip up her heels, I say! a hearty fellow
Of real flesh and blood's too good for the wench.
There shall be no greeting, I insist, except
Smashing her windows.

BRANDER.

Thumping the table.]

Order, order, order!
You'll admit, gentlemen, I know what life is?
And there being love-sick folks amongst us here,
I'll sing them an appropriate good-night.

Digitized by Google

Silence! for a song of the newest cut;
And mind you chime in with a good loud chorus.

[*Sings.*]

There lived in the cellar a sly old rat,
Who fed upon nothing but butter and fat;
Butter and fat, which he stole from the shelf,
'Till his paunch was like Doctor Luther's himself.
But the cook laid some poison that she had got,
And soon made the cellar for him too hot;
For the stuff, soon as eaten, his liver fried,
As if love had possession of his inside.

CHORUS (*joyously*).

As if love had possession of his inside.

He ran in, he ran out, he ran round and round;
He drank every puddle that was to be found,
And made in his agony many a bound:
He scratched and he gnawed the cellar all over,
But this did not help him a jot to recover;
Still by the poison his guts were fried,
As if love had possession of his inside.

CHORUS.

As if love had possession of his inside.

From sheer pain, to the kitchen in open day
He ran, and there on the hearth-stone lay,

Digitized by Google

In a panting, convulsed, and wretched plight;
Oh, but he was a sorry sight!
He's done for! the cook-maid exclaimed with pride,
As if love had possession of his inside.

CHORUS.

As if love had possession of his inside.

SIEBEL.

How the noodles are chuckling at this, now!
A mighty feat, laying poison for poor rats.

BRANDER.

In your esteem they stand high, there's no doubt.

ALTMAYER.

The pursy bald-pate! how very mild and humble
His misadventure makes him; he sees himself
Drawn to the very life in the swollen rat.

FAUST *and* MEPHISTOPHELES.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Beyond all things, I wish to introduce you
To jovial company, to show how lightly
Life may be passed, and how unanxiously.
These folks make every day a festival.
With much enjoyment, though with little wit,
Each, like young kittens playing with their tails,
Frisk round contented in their narrow spheres;

Digitized by Google

And whilst no headache stirs them to complain,
And whilst their credit with their host is good,
They're merry as crickets, and as free from care.

BRANDER.

No doubt these strangers are just off a journey;
By their behaviour one can see as much.
They've scarcely been here an hour, I'll be bound.

FROSCH.

You're quite right! Leipsic is a second Paris
To give a finishing air.

SIEBEL.

What are they, think you?

FROSCH.

I'll find out that, in the tossing off a bumper;
I'll worm it from them, like the cork from a bottle.
I should consider they are noblemen,
From their very proud and discontented looks.

BRANDER.

Noble indeed! I'll bet they're mountebanks.

ALTMAYER.

Very likely.

FROSCH.

Mark, how I'll banter them!

MEPHISTOPHELES (*to Faust*).

If the Devil had these fellows by the throat
They'd not perceive him.

Digitized by Google

FAUST.

Good day, gentlemen.

SIEBEL.

Good day to you, Sir.

[*Aside, looking askance from his seat at Mephistopheles.*

How that fellow halts

With one foot!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Pray allow us to join you;

Then we shall have good company at least,

Although good liquor can't be had, it seems.

ALTMAYER.

You're a very particular person—you are.

FROSCH.

You are from Rippach lately, I dare say?

Did you visit Mr. Hans before you left?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

We passed his place today, but did not stop.

When we saw him last he spoke much of his cousins,

And charged us with his compliments to each.

[*Bowing to Frosch.*

ALTMAYER (*aside*).

Faith, you've caught it! he's up to snuff, I see.

SIEBEL.

A sharp fellow!

FROSCH.

I'll show him up: have patience!

Digitized by Google

MEPHISTOPHELES.

We heard, I think, some voices, as we entered,
Singing in chorus? There must be, no doubt,
A famous echo from this vaulted roof;
A good song must sound admirably here.

FROSCH.

You are a virtuoso, I dare say?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

No! my wish to please is strong, my power weak.

ALTMAYER.

Give us a song.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

A dozen, if you like.

SIEBEL.

But let it be a new one, spick and span.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

We're just from Spain, the land of wine and song.

[*Sings.*]

Once on a time there lived a king,
And he had a favourite flea—

FROSCH.

A flea! did you catch that? A flea! that's odd!

MEPHISTOPHELES (*sings*).

Once on a time there lived a king,
And he had a favourite flea,
Of which he was fond, howe'er odd the thing,
As of his own son he could be.

Digitized by Google

Then he sent for his tailor; his tailor came:
And says he to the tailor, says he,
For a red coat and waistcoat, hose and breeches
the same,
Take measure of my young flea.

BRANDER.

And mind you don't forget to charge the tailor
To be exact in measuring him for the hose.

MEPHISTOPHELES (*sings*).

So he was attired in scarlet coat,
All dizened with ribbons and stars;
And forthwith the king, who on him did dote,
Made him ruler of home affairs;
His kindred, also, he did promote
To high offices, it appears.

Whereat all the courtiers began to rage;
For ladies and gentlemen too, [page,
From the queen to the nurse, from the lord to the
Got bit till their fidgets they could not assuage,
And could not tell what to do;
For they dared neither crack them nor scratch them away.
But we crush one that plagues us without delay.

CHORUS.

But we crush one that plagues us without delay.

Digitized by Google

FROSCH.

Capital!

SIEBEL.

Such be the fate of all fleas!

BRANDER.

Make your nails meet—so—and nick them cleverly.

ALTMAYER.

Freedom for ever! good wine for ever!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

I would most cheerfully drink to liberty,
If I'd good wine to do justice to the toast.

SIEBEL.

You'd better not repeat that speech again.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

I'd treat you, gentlemen, from our own stock,
If I thought the landlord would not be offended.

SIEBEL.

Let it be forthcoming! I'll take all the blame.

FROSCH.

We'll crown you king of all good jovial fellows,
If you give us a real prime glass—we will!
But prithee mind, it *must* be a fair quantum,
If I'm to be required to judge the flavour.

ALTMAYER (*aside*).

They're Rhenish wine-merchants, I should suppose.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Fetch me a gimblet.

Digitized by Google

BRANDER.

A gimblet! what for?

Surely you cannot have the casks at the door.

ALTMAYER.

Behind you there's a tool-chest of the landlord's.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

[*To Frosch—taking the gimblet.*]

Now, name the wine that you would wish to taste.

FROSCH.

What! do you mean that you have many sorts?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Every one's free to make his own selection.

ALTMAYER (*to Frosch*).

Ah! you begin to lick your lips already.

FROSCH.

Well then, if I am to take my choice—Rhenish:

Our fatherland affords us the best gifts.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

[*Boring a hole in the edge of the table, by Frosch.*]

Now get some wax at once, and make some stoppers.

ALTMAYER.

Why, these are mere jugglers' tricks.

MEPHISTOPHELES (*to Brander*).

What's your choice?

BRANDER.

Champagne for me, so it be bright and sparkling.

Digitized by Google

[*Mephistopheles bores again, one of them having in the mean time made the wax plugs to stop the holes.*

BRANDER.

Although true Germans hate, as they ought, the French,
I yet see no objection to French wine.
One can't dispense with what is foreign always:
Too much that's good grows too far off for that.

SIEBEL (*as Mephistopheles approaches his seat*).

I confess I don't admire acid wines:
I'm for a glass that's genuine and sweet.

MEPHISTOPHELES (*boring*).

Tokay shall you be served with, in a twinkling.

ALTMAYER.

Come, come, now! look me in the face—no quizzing!
I see you're only making fun of us?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

How can you dream that I should make so free
With such distinguisht guests? Come, pray be quick:
Say at once what wine shall I help you to?

ALTMAYER.

Any sort you please: I'm not particular.

[*After the holes are bored and stopped—*

MEPHISTOPHELES (*with strange gestures*).

Grapes doth the vine bear!
Horns doth the goat wear!

Digitized by Google

Strong juice the wine is;
Tough wood the vine is;
And this table of wood
May yield wine as good.
Into nature who looks
Sees more than is in books.
Place faith in what I tell;
And lo, here's a miracle!
Draw the plugs, fill your jugs, and swill.

ALL.

[*As each draws his stopper, and the wine he chose runs into each man's glass.*

Bravo! the glorious spring that flows for us!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Pray take especial care that none be spilt.

[*They drink repeatedly.*

ALL (*singing*).

Tol de rol lol! as we guzzle the wine,
We're as happy as cannibals! happy as swine!

MEPHISTOPHELES (*to Faust*).

Mark their enjoyment! now they're in their glory!

FAUST.

I am anxious to take my leave of this.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Pray stop and see a little more of the fun:
Their brutishness, ere long, will glare forth gloriously.

Digitized by Google

SIEBEL.

[*Drinks carelessly, and spills the wine on the ground, which turns to flame.*

Fire, fire! help, help! the devil! hell is burning!

MEPHISTOPHELES (*conjuring the flame*).

Be thou obedient, friendly element!

[*To the company.*]

This time, it was but a mere drop of fire
From Purgatory.

SIEBEL.

Zounds! what may that be?
It seems you don't know whom you have to deal with?
Rely on't, you shall be pull'd up for this.

FROSCH.

Yes, faith; you had better try that trick again!

ALTMAYER.

Let's get rid of him in a quiet way.

SIEBEL.

How dare you play your hocus-pocus here!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Silence, old wine-butt!

SIEBEL.

What! rude to us, too,
You broom-shank?

BRANDER.

Peace! or blows will fall like hail.

Digitized by Google

ALTMAYER.

[*Draws a plug; fire flies out against him.*]

Fire! fire! I'm all on fire!

SIEBEL.

Witchcraft! Strike home! he's out of the pale of law.

[*They draw their knives, and attack Mephistopheles.*

MEPHISTOPHELES (*with solemn gestures*).

Visionary scene and speech
Change the place and sense of each!

[*They stand amazed, and stare at each other.*

ALTMAYER.

Bless me! where am I? What a noble country!

FROSCH.

Am I in a vineyard? Can I trust my eyes?

SIEBEL.

What! doubt it, when the bunches touch your nose?

BRANDER.

What a stem under these green leaves! what grapes!

[*He takes hold of Siebel's nose; the rest do the same by each other, and brandish their knives.*

MEPHISTOPHELES (*as before*).

Error, loose the bandage from their eyes!
And do you, my masters, charge your memories—
For future revels—
With what the Devil's
Mode of jesting is.

Digitized by Google

[*He disappears with Faust; the fellows start back from each other.*

SIEBEL.

What's the matter?

ALTMAYER.

How?

FROSCH.

Was't your nose I had hold of?

BRANDER (*to Siebel*).

Bless me! I'm nipping your nose with my fingers.

ALTMAYER.

I feel the shock through every limb of me—
A chair, a chair! I'm fainting.

FROSCH.

No, you're not.
Do, prithee, tell me how all this has happened.

SIEBEL.

Where is the fellow? If I do but catch him,
'Tis as much as his life is worth, I'll warrant!

ALTMAYER.

I swear I saw him, with my own two eyes,
Astride a wine-cask ride out of the cellar.—
Why zounds! my feet are like two pigs of lead.
[*Turning towards the table.*
I wonder if the wine is running still?

Digitized by Google

SIEBEL.

It was all trickery, and cheat, and humbug.

FROSCH.

And yet I made sure I was drinking wine.

BRANDER.

But the grapes are most mysterious to me.

ALTMAYER.

Well, well! let any body, after this,
Persuade me, if they can, there's no such thing
As miracles in our days.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

WITCHES' KITCHEN.

A large cauldron hangs over the fire on a low hearth; various figures ascend in the vapours rising from it. A female MONKEY-CAT *sits by the cauldron, skims it, and takes care that it does not boil over. A male* MONKEY-CAT, *with the young ones, is seated by, warming himself. The walls and ceiling are decked with the strangest kinds of witch furniture.*

FAUST, MEPHISTOPHELES.

FAUST.

I AM disgusted with this senseless witchcraft.
Shall I recover midst these wilds of delirium?
What need have I of an old hag's advice?
And will this hodge-podge really take away
The wear and tear of thirty years from my body?
If you've nought better to propose, hope's gone!
Has Nature, or has no superior spirit,
Discovered an effective balsam yet?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

There's sense, my friend, at least, in that last question.
There is a natural means of renovation;

Digitized by Google

But of another book it forms a chapter,
And a passing strange one, too.

FAUST.

I will know it.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Well then: I humbly beg to recommend—
In default of money, sorcery, or physician—
That you betake yourself to daily labour;
And hack and dig in the field, and confine yourself,
Body and mind, in a small perfect circle.
That you learn how to subsist on simple food; [do,
That you live 'mongst grazing herds, and much as they
And consider it no robbery, to manure
The field you reap. Such is the surest way
To keep a man young and hale to fourscore.

FAUST.

I'm not accustomed to it. I could not bring
Myself, by any means, to use the spade;
Such confined life would not suit me in the least.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Then, after all, the witch must be applied to.

FAUST.

But why the old woman in especial?
Cannot you brew the beverage yourself?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

A fine amusement that would be indeed!

Digitized by Google

I could build a thousand bridges in the time.
The task requires not merely skill and science,
But a patient spirit plodding through long years;
And time alone can give the elixir strength.
The ingredients, too, are of exceeding rarity.
And, though 'tis true the Devil taught her how,
Yet, for all that, the Devil cannot make it.

[*Perceiving the Beasts.*] [man!

See what a graceful breed! that's the maid! that's the

[*To the Beasts.*]

Then your mistress, brutes, is from home?

THE BEASTS.

To the feast gone:
Up the chimney flown.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

How long does she rove, when she goes?

THE BEASTS.

Whilst we're warming our paws.

MEPHISTOPHELES (*to Faust*).

What think you of the lovely creatures, hey?

FAUST.

The most incongruous things I ever saw.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Nay, now! a conversation so *recherché*
Is exactly that in which I most delight.

[*To the Beasts.*

Digitized by Google

What are you stirring? what have you got,
You whelps, in that pot?

THE BEASTS.

Coarse beggar's broth—
Skimming the froth.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

You'll have customers plenty
For that sort of dainty.

THE HE-CAT (*draws near, and coaxes Mephistopheles*).

Begin, throw the dice,
Make me rich in a trice,
Let me win!
Oh, quick now, commence!
Get me out of this hash:
If I'd plenty of cash,
I should have sense.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

If he could put in the lottery,
How lucky he'd reckon his lot to be!

[*The young Monkey-Cats have in the mean time been playing with a large globe, and roll it forwards.*

THE HE-CAT.

That is the world:
It falls, it springs;
'Tis ceaselessly twirled;
Like glass it rings,

Digitized by Google

Which is broken easy;
'Tis hollow, 'tis crazy;
It gleams bright here,
And brighter there.
I'm alive, dear boy,
Don't press so nigh!
But thou must die.
Some shards, hey!
Why 'tis made of clay!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

What's that sieve for? pronounce!

THE HE-CAT (*unhanging it*).

Wert a thief, I should know thee at once.

[*He runs to the She-Cat, and makes her look through it.*

Know'st the thief and darest not his name announce.

MEPHISTOPHELES (*approaching the fire*).

And this pot?

BOTH THE CATS.

The ninny! he knows not the kettle!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

You're uncivil brutes, I wot.

THE HE-CAT.

Don't frisk;
Take this whisk,
And sit down on the settle.

[*He induces Mephistopheles to sit.*

Digitized by Google

FAUST.

[*Who all this time has been standing before a mirror, now approaching, and now receding from it.*

What a vision! what a celestial image
This magic mirror doth enshrine! Oh Love,
Lend me thy fleetest wings, that I may soar
To the blest region where such beauty dwells!
Ah, when I move from one particular spot,
And venture nearer, I see her but in mist!——
The very loveliest image of a woman!
Is't possible woman can be so lovely?
Is there aught like this vision upon earth?
Or do I see, in that recumbent form,
The inmost essence of the far-off heavens?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

When a God works hard for six successive days,
And himself, on resting from his toil, says bravo!
It is but natural for one to expect
That something more than common should come of it.
For the present, gaze on to satiety:
I've a charmer like this for you, in my eye;
And happy he who clasps her to his bosom.

[*Faust continues looking in the mirror. Mephistopheles stretches himself on the settle, and, playing with the tail, goes on conversing as at first.*

Digitized by Google

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Here sit I like a throned king!
This fan my sceptre: the only thing
Awanting is a crown.

THE BEASTS,

[*Who have hitherto been playing all sorts of strange confused antics, bring Mephistopheles a crown with loud acclamation.*

Pray be so good
As with sweat and blood
To glue it firmly down.

[*They handle the crown clumsily, and break it in two pieces, with which they jump about.*

Well done we!
Now we speak and see,
Now we hear and rhyme;—

FAUST (*before the mirror*).

Woe's me! I am becoming almost mad.

MEPHISTOPHELES (*pointing to the beasts*).

And my head, too, begins to swim round now.

THE BEASTS.

— And hope, with luck, in time,
When things are less perplext,
That thoughts will follow next.

Digitized by Google

FAUST (*as before*).

My heart begins to burn: pray let's begone!

MEPHISTOPHELES (*in the former attitude*).

Well! thus much we may safely state,
Their poetry's sincere at any rate.

[*The cauldron, which the She-Cat has neglected, begins to boil over; a great flame arises and flares up the chimney. The* WITCH *comes down through the flame with horrible screaming.*

WITCH.

Augh! augh! augh! augh!
Damned beast! accursed sow!
Neglecting the kettle, scorching your dame
With the flame!
[*She spies Faust and Mephistopheles.*]
How, how!
What now?
Who are ye?
How dare ye?
Slinking drones!
Fire pains
Search your bones
And veins!

[*She dips the skimming-ladle into the kettle, and scatters flames at Faust, Mephistopheles, and the Beasts;—the Beasts moan.*

Digitized by Google

MEPHISTOPHELES,

[*Who whisks round the fan in his hand, and knocks about the glasses and pots.*

To pieces they go!
The glasses, ho-ho!
The pots also!
How they are hopping!
How the porridge is slopping!
Keeping up the joke, old carrion;
Beating time to your sweet clarion!

[*As the Witch, full of rage and amazement, steps back.*]

Thou atomy! thou witch! thou scarecrow! thou
Hag! dost know thy lord and master now?
What should hinder me from crashing
Thee and thy cattish imps, and dashing
All of you into hell?
Is this all the respect you can afford
For the smart dress and feather of your lord?
Am I forced my name to tell?
Have I concealed this face of mine,
You swine?

THE WITCH.

Pardon this rough reception, Master, pray
I have done ill.
But where are your two ravens then, today?
Why is the horse's foot not visible?

Digitized by Google

MEPHISTOPHELES.

True, 'tis a long time since we met, you dunce!
So the apology may serve for once.
This march of intellect, too,
That's licking all the world to proper shape,
Hath even marched beyond the Devil;
So the northern phantom you will no more view,
To whom the pious set down every scrape;
Nor claws, nor horns,
Nor tail adorns,
In the present day, the great high-priest of evil.
As to the foot, though I can't do without it,
I've worn false calves for many a day,
As many a dandy does, they say,
Because in good society they'd scout it.

THE WITCH (*dancing*).

I am almost mad, I protest, I declare,
To see the gallant Satan once more here.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Don't call me by that name, you hag, I say!

THE WITCH.

Why? what harm hath it done you, pray?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Too long in story-books, it now is feared
Without doing any good, it hath appeared;
So they have got rid of the wicked name,

Digitized by Google

Though the wicked seem to flourish much the same.
You may style me Baron—that is just as good
A travelling name as any one can wear;
I am like other cavaliers, a cavalier.
You do not doubt my claim to noble blood?
See, this is the escutcheon that I bear!
[*He makes a licentious gesture.*

THE WITCH (*laughing immensely*).

Ha! ha! ha! I see thou art
The same mad wag thou ever wert!

MEPHISTOPHELES (*to Faust*).

Do pray attend
To this, my friend!
This is the way to deal with a witch.

THE WITCH.

Now, gentlemen, what are you for, I beseech?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

A glass of that juice, of which you wot
Full well, I think;
Let it be of the oldest you have got.

THE WITCH.

Most willingly: there's a flask on the shelf
Out of which I oft take a sip myself:
It no longer has any stink. [*Whispering.*
But you well know, if he drink it unprepared
Not an hour longer will his life be spared.

Digitized by Google

MEPHISTOPHELES.

This gentleman's a worthy friend of mine:
'Twill benefit him greatly, I opine.
The best your kitchen yields I do not grudge.
So draw your circle, spell your spells; come, budge!
And fill with cordial, to the very brim,
The cup for him.

[*The Witch, with strange gestures, draws a circle and places odd things therein. Meantime the glasses begin to ring, and the cauldron to make music. Lastly she brings a great book, and—placing the Monkey-Cats in the circle, who are made to serve her for a desk, and to hold the torches,—she beckons Faust to approach her.*

FAUST (*to Mephistopheles*).

But tell me, what is to result from this?
All this absurdity, all these frantic motions?
I know and hate such juggling, from of old.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Pooh! all that stuff is only fit to laugh at.
Pray don't be so fastidious. Like physicians,
She must play off some hocus-pocus tricks,
In order that the dose may operate.

[*He compels Faust to enter the circle.*

THE WITCH (*declaiming with strong emphasis*).

Attend,
And comprehend!

Digitized by Google

Let one, ten be,
Two pass o'er,
Even make three,
And lose four,
Then thou'rt rich.
Of five and six, straight—
So says the Witch—
Make seven and eight;
Thus 'tis done;
And nine is one,
And ten is none.
That is the Witch's one times one!

FAUST.

It seems to me the hag must be delirious.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

There is a good deal more of this sort yet;
I know it all full well; the entire book
Is pitched to the same key; many a day
I've wasted on't, for perfect paradox
To sage and simple is alike mysterious.
Aye, friend, this art is old and youthful too;
Effective and resourceful now, as of yore.
It hath ever been the vogue, instead of truth—
Plain, simple, unexciting truth—to spread
Error's astounding dicta and strange quips,
They being taught, believed, and handed down

Digitized by Google

From age to age uninterruptedly;
For who in the minds of the unreflective herd
Would take an interest? and they're prone to believe
There's some charm in dogmas thoroughly unmeaning,
Such as one being three, three one, and either neither.

THE WITCH (*continues declaiming*).

Of knowledge, the high power
Is vainly sought,
As the dower
Of patient, or of daring thought.
From the world 'tis hidden wholly.
'Tis his lot
Who thinketh not,
Without toil, to gain it solely.

FAUST.

What sort of nonsense is this she recites?
My head is like to split! meseems, I hear
Thousands of idiots all at once declaiming.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Enough, enough, thou most profound of sibyls!
Fill up a brimmer without more ado;
The draught will do my worthy friend no harm;
He is a man hath passed through many grades,
And taken many a hearty gulp before.

[*The Witch with many ceremonies pours the liquor into a cup; as Faust puts it to his mouth a bright flame arises.*

Digitized by Google

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Down with it at one tiff! why hesitate?
To the heart's core it very soon will warm you.
What! leagued with the Devil and afraid of fire!

[*The Witch dissolves the circle.*

FAUST *steps out.*

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Now let's go forth at once! you must not stay.

THE WITCH.

Much good may the elixir do you, Sir.

MEPHISTOPHELES (*to the Witch*).

And if there's aught I can do to pleasure you,
You've but to name it to me at Walpurgis.

THE WITCH.

Here is a song: I pray your acceptance.
It will have on you an odd sort of effect,
If you give it voice occasionally.

MEPHISTOPHELES (*to Faust*).

Now then off, off, with promptness, 'neath my guidance.
Why you must be in a fever of impatience
To let the spirit work within and without!
With what keen pleasure you will soon experience
How Cupid can bestir himself, and bound
Hither and thither in hot gamesome mood.
Thereafter, I'll instruct you to enjoy
The true nobility of idleness.

Digitized by Google

FAUST.

One moment more; let me take one glance more
At the mirror! that fair form was all too lovely!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Nay, nay! I promise that you soon shall see
This beau-ideal in real flesh and blood.
Aside.]
Each girl you meet, when works this spell in
Your bosom, you will deem a Helen.

Digitized by Google

THE STREET.

FAUST. MARGARET *passing by.*

FAUST.

My charming lady, may I be allowed
To offer you my arm, and see you home?

MARGARET.

I'm neither one nor t'other, and I want
Nobody's help—I can get home by myself.

[*She disengages herself, and exit.*

FAUST.

A lovely girl, by heavens! the loveliest far
I ever had a glimpse of: so well bred!
So modest! yet so spirited withall!
Her coral lips, her young cheeks' rosy light,
Her eyes, cast down with so much bashful grace!
How deeply, how endurably, are all
Stamped on my heart!

MEPHISTOPHELES *enters.*

FAUST.

Get me that girl forthwith.

Digitized by Google

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Which?

FAUST.

She that passed but now.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Oh! that one?

She comes from the confessional, absolved
From all her sins. I stole up close to the chair,
And overheard the innocent young thing:
She sought her confessor for next to nothing.
I've no power over her.

FAUST.

She's past fourteen.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

You really talk like a Lothario,
Who covets every rose-bud, and conceives
Honour nor favour can exist in the world,
That merely for the plucking mayn't be had:
But this won't always do.

FAUST.

Pray, Mr. Plausible,
Don't bore me with your civilian law codes.
I tell you in a word, our compact's ended
Unless this very night the sweet young creature
Is lying in my arms.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Impossible!
I need a fortnight to find opportunity.

Digitized by Google

FAUST.

With seven clear hours before me, should I need
The Devil's help to seduce such an artless child?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Why you talk now as loosely as a Frenchman.
But pray don't fret yourself into a fever.
What signifies bolting straight on to enjoyment?
The delight is never half so exquisite
As when your doll has been moulded and worked up,
By nonsenses of all sorts, to your purpose;
As many an Italian tale sets forth.

FAUST.

But I have appetite without all that.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

In sober seriousness, not offensively,
I tell you once for all—the lovely girl
Is not to be obtained in such a violent
Haste:——she is not to be taken by storm,
And we must have recourse to stratagem.

FAUST.

Procure me something from her angel-stores;
Take me to the chamber where she reposes;
Get me a kerchief that has screened her bosom;
Get me a garter of the lovely girl's.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

To prove to you how anxiously I wish

Digitized by Google

To relieve your passion, not a moment shall be l
This very day I'll lead you to her chamber.

FAUST.

And shall I see her, speak to her, enjoy her?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

No; she'll be at a neighbour's. But meantime
You, all alone in the very air she breathes,
May feast on the coming joys hope shadows forth.

FAUST.

Can we go this instant?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

No, 'tis too early yet.

FAUST.

Get me some present for her. [*Exit.*

MEPHISTOPHELES.

That's capital!
Presents at once! that's the way to succeed.
Well, many a fine place, and long-buried treasure,
Are known to me:——I must think them over.

[*Exit.*

Digitized by Google

EVENING.

A small neat Room.

MARGARET (*braiding and binding up her hair*).

WHAT I would give to know who 'twas, today
That spoke to me on passing, in the street!
Of a noble house—that I feel quite assured,
I read that in his brow and graceful mein—
Besides, he would not else have used such freedom.
[*Exit.*

MEPHISTOPHELES, FAUST.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Come in—softly as may be—but come in!

FAUST (*after a pause*).

I entreat you now to leave me by myself.

MEPHISTOPHELES (*looking round*).

It is not every maiden that's so cleanly. [*Exit.*

FAUST (*looking round*).

Hail twilight to this sanctuary! Possess my heart,
Ye love-pangs, nourished by the dews of hope!

Digitized by Google

What order, peace, contentment, breathes around!
What abounding comforts 'midst frugality!
What happiness within this humble cell!

[*He throws himself on the leathern easy-chair beside the bed.*

Receive me, ancient relic, thou that hast
Welcomed with open arms, in joy or sorrow,
The generations that have passed away!
How often, round this patriarchal throne,
Have eager swarms in buoyant childhood clustered!
It may be, here, her infant cheeks aglow
With gratitude for some fine Christmas gift,
My love hath kissed her grandsire's withered hand.
Thy spirit of comfort and of order, maiden!
Is breathing round me; that spirit which daily
Instructs thee like a parent;—which bids thee
Spread the white table-cloth, and sand the floor;
Which enables thee to make this hut a palace.
And here— [*He lifts a bed-curtain.*
What delicious tremors thrill my frame!
I could linger here for hours. Oh Nature!
Here in light dreams you nursed her ripening form;
Here lay the child, its gentle bosom heaving
With healthful life! aye, here the divine image,
Amidst all pure and hallowed aspirations,
Developed its exceeding loveliness!

Digitized by Google

And thou! what brought thee hither? what wouldst [here?
What agitation I am in! How is't
I feel so changed in spirit, so heavy-hearted?
Poor Faust! why I no longer recognize thee.
Is it enchanted air that I inhale?
With hot desire I panted for enjoyment,
Instant enjoyment; and lo! I feel myself
Dissolving in a love-dream. Are we then
The sport of every atmospheric change?
Suppose, this very moment she came in!
For thy guilty purpose what excuse couldst make?
The vaunting spirit, then, crouched at her feet
Would lie—how shrunk by meanness!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Quick! she comes!

FAUST.

Away! away! I'll never come here more!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Here is a casket tolerably heavy;
I took it from elsewhere—into the press with't!
Quick! don't hesitate—she'll be beside herself!
I put the trinkets in to gain another:
It matters not—children are children, play's play,
The wide world over.

FAUST.

I don't know—shall I?

Digitized by Google

MEPHISTOPHELES.

What a question! But you, may be, wish to keep
The treasure for yourself? If so, I advise
Those precious hours, now destined for your lusts
And for my further trouble, may be spared.
I hope you've not an avaricious turn.
I scratch my head—rub my hands—

[*He places the casket in the press, and closes the lock.*

Now then, away—
To bend the sweet young creature to your will.
Why, you look as if going to the lecture-room;
As if physics, aye, and metaphysics too,
Stood grey and bodily before you there.
Come, let's be off! [*Exeunt.*

MARGARET (*with a lamp*).

How very close and sultry it feels here.

[*She opens the window.*

And yet 'tis not so over-warm without.
Something, I can't tell what, seems to come over me.
I wish to God my mother was come home!
I feel all over, like—I can't tell how.
What a silly timid girl am I, to be sure.

[*She begins to sing as she undresses.*]

SONG.

O'er the kingdom of Thule a monarch once reigned,
And his love for a beautiful mistress retained,

Digitized by Google

Tho' the grave had closed o'er her, tho' long years had rolled,
Who, when dying, had given him a Goblet of Gold.

Beyond aught else, he prized it, his realm could produce;
At his feasts, from that only he quaffed the bright juice;
And tears gushed from that warm-hearted monarch of old,
Whensoe'er he drank out of the Goblet of Gold.

This king summed his cities, when he found death was near,
And his treasures, and all that would come to his heir;
Of all these he grudged nothing, nor wished to withhold,
But amongst them he summ'd not the Goblet of Gold.

With his knights seated round him, in splendour and state,
At his last royal feast, in the proud hall he sate
Of his castle ancestral, 'neath which the waves rolled,
And he drank all their healths from the Goblet of Gold.

Yes, the jovial old toper amidst them stood up,
And drained for the last time his favourite cup;
Drained the last of life's glow, ere his bosom grew cold,
And then into the waves flung the Goblet of Gold.

And his long-cherisht love-gift, with stedfast glance, he
Beheld splash, eddy round, and sink deep in the sea;
Then sank back—and of that merry monarch of old
The last draught was quaffed from the goblet of Gold.

Digitized by Google

[*She opens the press, to put away her clothes, and sees the casket.*

How could this casket possibly come here?
I locked the press? Yes, I'm quite sure I did.
'Tis very strange! I wonder what is in it?
It may be, some one's brought it as a pledge—
My mother's lent some money on it, perhaps?
Dear! there's a little key hangs to the ribbon!
I've a great mind to open it—I will!
My God! I never—no, *indeed* I never,
In all my life, saw any thing so fine.
A set of ornaments fit for a countess
To wear, upon the grandest festival!
Dear! how becoming such a chain would be.
I wonder who all these fine things belong to?

[*She puts them on, and walks before the looking-glass.*

Ah, if I had but such a pair of ear-rings!
One cuts so different a figure in them!
What signifies poor beauty unadorned?
Now and then getting praise that's more like pity!
But all pay court to, all press after, those
Who've rank, and wealth, and jewels at command.
Alas, for us poor girls in humble life!

Digitized by Google

PROMENADE.

Faust walking up and down thoughtfully. To him comes Mephistopheles.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

By despised love! by the elements of hell!
By—would that I knew aught worse to curse by!

FAUST.

What is't? What pinches you so tight?
Such a face, I ne'er beheld in all my life!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

I'd give myself to the Devil instantly,
If I did not chance to be the Devil myself.

FAUST.

Is your head deranged? Very appropriate,
I needs must say, for you to act the madman!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Think of Gretchen's jewels, borne off by a priest!
Because her mother feels a dread of them.
A fine nose, truly, that old body hath!
She is for ever snuffling in her prayer-book,
And smelling every article in the house

Digitized by Google

To find out if 'tis holy or profane;
And so she quickly scents out that the jewels
Have not the odour sanctity bestows;
Whereon, quoth she: 'My child, ill-gotten wealth
'Entraps the precious soul and wastes the body;
'We'll consecrate it to the Mother of God,
'And she will gladden us with heavenly manna.'
Little Margy pouts at this pious proposition;
'One should not look a gift horse in the mouth,'
Thinks she; 'He can't be godless who has behaved
'So generously.' But the priest is sent for,
Hears the tale, and sees with sparkling eyes the treasure;
And says: 'This proves a pious disposition.
'He who conquers is the gainer. Mother Church
'Hath a good stomach, and hath eaten up
'Entire realms, without once surfeiting
'Herself. The Church alone, my pious friend,
'Can digest ill-gotten wealth.'

FAUST.

The power's more general:
A Jew can do the same, so can a king.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

So saying, off he sweeps clasp, chain, and ring,
Like a few walnuts; and, with such thanks as
Such sort of gift would merit, takes his leave,
Promising them a heavenly reward.—
And greatly edified they were withall.

Digitized by Google

FAUST.

And Gretchen?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Sits restless and perplext; [night
Knows not what she would, or should; thinks day and
On the trinkets, and still more on the bringer of them.

FAUST.

Her grief distresses me. Get her forthwith
Another set: the first was nothing great.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Oh! certainly; all's child's-play to the gentleman.

FAUST.

Come, come; don't be a milk-and-water Devil.
Order things as I wish: get a fresh set
Of jewels; and be sure, that you stick close
To that old neighbour of hers.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Sir, I obey.

[*Faust exit.*

A love-sick fool like this would puff away
Sun, moon, and stars, with pure indifference,
To please his mistress. [*Exit.*

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

THE NEIGHBOUR'S HOUSE.

MARTHA (*alone*).

Ah, well, may God forgive my poor dear husband:
Though to be sure he has served me bad enough!
Going straight away, forsooth, into the world,
And leaving *me* widowed and lonesome here,
Though I was such a faithful wife to *him*,
And though I never did a thing to vex him—
Never in all my life: I loved him dearly. [*She weeps.*
But may be he is dead: oh dear! oh dear!
If I had but a certificate of the death!

MARGARET *enters.*

MARGARET.

Martha! Martha!

MARTHA.

What's the matter, Gretchen?

MARGARET.

I shake so, my knees almost sink under me!
Martha! another ebony casket,
Just like the last, I've found in my press, Martha!

Digitized by Google

And such splendid things in it! far more splendid
And costly, than the first were.

MARTHA.

I'm sure, then,
I would not tell my mother of't this time:
She'd carry that to the confessional too.

MARGARET.

Ah, do but only look now—only look!

MARTHA (*dressing her up*).

Oh, you lucky creature!

MARGARET.

How provoking 'tis
That one can't wear them at church, or in the streets!

MARTHA.

Come over here as often as you please;
Here you can put them on in private, dear,
And walk before the glass, and admire yourself
For an hour together; and that's some pleasure.
Besides, as opportunities occur—
Festivals, merry-makings, and the like—
Little by little, one can let folks see 'em;
First the gold chain, then the pearl drops; and so
They may, perhaps, escape your mother's notice;
Or we'll find some pretence to quiet her.

MARGARET.

But can you, now, imagine *who* has put

Digitized by Google

Two such rich caskets, Martha, in my press?
I fear there *must* be something wrong about it.
[*Some one knocks.*
Good God! is that my mother?

MARTHA (*looking through the blinds*).

'Tis some stranger.
Come in!

MEPHISTOPHELES (*enters*).

I make free to enter at once—
I beg to apologize to the ladies.
[*He steps back respectfully before Margaret.*
My business was with Mistress Martha Schwerdtlein.

MARTHA.

I am the person; what's your pleasure, Sir?

MEPHISTOPHELES (*aside to her*).

Having ascertained, ma'am, where you're to be found,
I'll not intrude at present, as I see
You are engaged with some one of distinction.
Pray pardon, ma'am, the liberty I've taken;
With your leave, ma'am, I'll call again this evening.

MARTHA (*aloud*).

Only think, child, of all things in the world!
This gentleman mistakes you for a lady.

MARGARET.

I am only a poor young girl: dear heavens!

Digitized by Google

The gentleman's so very complaisant:
The jewels and the pearls are none of mine.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Ah! 'tis not the mere ornaments alone;
There is an air, a look, so very striking—
I'm overjoyed to find that I may stay.

MARTHA.

What is your errand, then? I am so curious—

MEPHISTOPHELES.

I wish with all my heart I'd better news:
I trust you'll not be prejudiced 'gainst the bearer:
Your husband, ma'am, is dead, and sends by me
His parting remembrances.

MARTHA.

Dead! poor soul!
My dear husband dead! oh dear, oh dear! 'twill kill me.

MARGARET.

Good, worthy Martha, pray now don't despair;
Don't take it so to heart.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

List the sad tale!

MARGARET.

That's why I'd never wish to be in love:
Such a loss would make me grieve myself to death.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Joy must have sorrow: sorrow must have joy.

Digitized by Google

MARTHA.

But tell me all about his dying moments!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

He lies, ma'am, in St. Anthony's, in Padua;
In a consecrated spot, for ever cool;
A choice resting-place.

MARTHA.

Have you brought nought for me?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Oh, yes! I've brought a somewhat weighty charge:
You must have three hundred masses sung forthwith!
But I've brought nothing in my trunks or pocket.

MARTHA.

What! not a medal even; not such token
As every journeyman mechanic hoards,
For luck's sake, at the bottom of his pouch,
And rather starves—rather begs than—

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Madam,
I'm very sorry, really—very sorry—
Himself was not the squanderer, be assured;
He bitterly repented all his sins,
Aye, and his ill-luck even more than they.

MARGARET.

Ah, that poor mortals should be so unlucky!
I'll not fail to sing many a requiem for him.

Digitized by Google

MEPHISTOPHELES.

So kind a girl deserves a spouse forthwith.

MARGARET.

Oh dear! no, no, there's time enough for that.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

If not a husband, yet at least a sweetheart.
'Twere surely one of heaven's choicest gifts
To clasp so sweet an angel in one's arms.

MARGARET.

That, Sir, is not the custom in this country.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Custom or not, such things do sometimes happen.

MARTHA.

But pray tell me—

MEPHISTOPHELES.

I stood beside his death-bed—
Rather better than mere dung, to be sure,
Half-rotted straw—but he died a true Christian,
Duly acknowledging his great unworthiness:
'What a wretch must I be, to be sure,' quoth he,
'To leave, in such a way, my wife and business!
'Oh, the mere recollection of it kills me!
'Oh that, before I died, I had her pardon!'

MARTHA (*weeping*).

The dear, good soul! I have long since forgiven him.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

'Tho', God knows, she was more to blame than I.'

Digitized by Google

MARTHA.

'Tis a lie! What, tell lies on the brink of the grave!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

He did romance a little, there's no doubt,
With his last breath, if I know aught of men:
Quoth he, 'I'm sure *I'd* not the least occasion
'To gape for pastime, in this work-day world;
'First to get children, then to get bread for them;
'And that too in the very widest sense,
'Without even eating my own share in peace.'

MARTHA.

And did he so forget my faith, my love,
My drudgery, by day and night—the wretch?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Nay, nay, he dwelt on it with great affection;
Quoth he, 'Heaven knows I prayed most fervently,
'When I left Malta, for my wife and children;
'And Heaven was so far gracious, that we took
'A Turkish ship, with treasure of the Sultan's;
'Our bravery was crowned with due success;
'And I had my share, as was all fair play.'

MARTHA.

How! what! where is't? he can't have buried it?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Who could tell where, now, scattered as it is
To the four winds of heaven? As he was strolling,

Digitized by Google

A perfect stranger, through the streets of Naples,
A fair young damsel took an interest in him,
And proved so fond and faithful, that he bore
The tokens of her love to his blessed end.

MARTHA.

Oh, the villain! the robber of his children!
And all the misery, all the poverty,
Could not prevent the wretch's scandalous doings?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

But consider, he has atoned for't with his life.
Now, were I in your place, I'd put on mourning
For one chaste year, and look round the mean time
For some new sweetheart worthier my affection.

MARTHA.

Oh, God! but then, 'tis no such easy matter
To find another like my poor first husband;
There could not be a kinder-hearted fool;
His only faults were, loving wine too much,
And spending too much time away from home
In other women's company, and gaming.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Nay! nay! but things might have gone smooth enough,
If he, on his part, had but only winked
At the same number of small faults in you;
I'd change rings with you myself, on this condition.

Digitized by Google

MARTHA.

Oh, dear! the gentleman is pleased to jest.

MEPHISTOPHELES (*aside*).

'Tis high time to be off: I make no doubt
She'd even take the Devil at his word.

[*To Margaret.*]

And how does *your* heart stand affected, then?

MARGARET.

What do you mean, Sir?

MEPHISTOPHELES (*aside*).

The good, innocent child! [*Aloud.*
Ladies, I bid ye farewell.

MARGARET.

Farewell, Sir!

MARTHA.

Oh, but pray tell me first—I'm very anxious
For a certificate, stating where, how,
And when the poor dear soul died, and was buried;
I always was a great friend to decorum
And regularity, and I should like
To read his death, Sir, in the weekly papers.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

My worthy madam, that is soon accomplisht;
Truth is made manifest, all the world over,
By the testimony of two witnesses;
And I've a gallant friend who would, no doubt,

Digitized by Google

Go with me, and attest, before the judge,
These facts. I will bring him here.

MARTHA.

Oh, pray do!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

And this young lady—won't she be here too?
A fine lad, faith, he is! has travelled much;
The most polite man in the world, to ladies.

MARGARET.

I should be so confused, and so ashamed,
In the presence of so fine a gentleman!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

In the presence of no emperor on earth.

MARTHA.

In my garden, that you see behind the house,
We shall expect to meet you both this evening.

Digitized by Google

THE STREET.

FAUST, MEPHISTOPHELES.

FAUST.

How is't? how have you managed? all in fair train?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Bravissimo! Do I find you all on fire?
Gretchen will soon be yours; this very evening
You'll meet her at her neighbour Martha's house.
That now's indeed the woman for your purpose;
Specially formed, as one may say, by nature,
For the worthy calling of procuress.

FAUST.

So far all's right!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

However, on our side
Something's required too.

FAUST.

Well, one good turn
Is deserving of another: pray what is't?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Merely to make a formal deposition

Digitized by Google

That the outstretcht carcase of her wedded lord
Reposes in holy ground, at Padua.

FAUST.

A sage proceeding, to be sure, on your part!
We must take a journey thither, I suppose,
To enable us?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Sancta simplicitas!
There's not the least necessity: you've only
To testify to the fact, which need not
Require or imply much knowledge of it.

FAUST.

If you've nought better to propose than this,
The scheme is at an end.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Most holy man!
There's for you, now! And so, I'm to suppose
'Twould be the very first time in your life
That you had borne false witness? Have you not,
With unawed confidence, given definitions
Of God; of the world, and all that stirs in it;
Of man, and the workings of his head and heart?
And have you—looking candidly and fairly
To the real nature of things, you must admit
You have not—known nearly as much of these
As you do of Mr. Schwerdtlein's death?

Digitized by Google

FAUST.

Thou art,

And ever wilt be, a liar and a sophist.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Aye, if one did not dive a little deeper.
And won't you now tomorrow, in all honour,
Make a fool of that poor child, by swearing
With your whole heart and soul to love her always?

FAUST.

And truly, from my heart's innermost depths.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

All very fine, and very sentimental.
And then you'll talk of eternal truth and love,
And of one exclusive all-absorbing passion:
And will that, too, come from the depths of the heart?

FAUST.

Peace! peace! I say, it will. What! when I feel,
And seek a name for the passion—the frenzy—
But in vain! when I give my senses scope
To range the world, to hunt out, and to grasp
At all the most sublime expressions known!
When I call this flame which is consuming me
Endless, eternal—aye, *eternal!* pray
Is that a devilish play of lying sophistry?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

I'm right for all that.

Digitized by Google

Hear! prithee mark this—
And spare my lungs—he who is pre-determined
To be right, and has but a tongue, will be so.
But come—I'm tired of this gossip—you *are* right,—
Especially as I have no alternative.

Digitized by Google

GARDEN.

MARGARET *on* FAUST'S *arm*: MARTHA *with* MEPHISTOPHELES: *walking up and down.*

MARGARET.

NAY, now! I'm sure that you are only trifling,
Lowering yourself, to make me feel ashamed:
Great travellers are always condescending,
Putting up with things out of mere complaisance:
I know too well that my poor conversation
Can never please a man of your experience.

FAUST.

One glance, one word of thine, gives me more pleasure
Than all the wisdom in the universe.

[*He kisses her hand.*

MARGARET.

How can you inconvenience yourself so,
To kiss a hand so coarse and hard as this?
I'm forced to do so many sorts of things—
My mother is, indeed, too strict and nice.

[*They pass on.*

Digitized by Google

MARTHA.

So, Sir, you're always, in this sort of way,
Travelling about from one place to another?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Business and duty make it quite imperative.
How many a place one leaves with great regret,
And yet may not remain in't!

MARTHA.

'Tis well enough
In the wild years of youth to rove about so;
But the evil day will come at last to all;
And to sneak a lone old bachelor to the grave—
That was never yet for any body's comfort.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

I shudder at the distant prospect of it.

MARTHA.

Then, worthy Sir, think better of't in time.

[*They pass on.*

MARGARET.

Ah, but out of sight out of mind, you know:
Politeness is a thing of course to you:
Friends in abundance you must have, I'm sure,
So very much more sensible than I.

FAUST.

My dearest angel, trust me when I say
That vanity and narrow-mindedness

Digitized by Google

Are often fitter names for what's called sensible.

MARGARET.

How?

FAUST.

Alas! that innocence should never duly
Value itself, and its own holy worth!
That humility, that sweet simplicity,
The highest gifts of love-filled, generous nature—

MARGARET.

Oh, do but spare a moment now and then
To think of me! 'tis all I dare to hope:
I shall have time enough to think on you.

FAUST.

I dare say, my sweet girl, you're much alone?

MARGARET.

Yes; for although our household is but small,
There's much that must be done and looked to daily;
We keep no maid, so I'm obliged myself
To cook, and clean the house, and knit and sew,
And run on all the necessary errands;
My mother is so very accurate
In every thing—not that our circumstances
Make the necessity so very pressing
For her to use such great care and economy;
My father left a pretty little property,
A small snug house and garden near the town,

Digitized by Google

So in fact we might do more than many others.
However, now I have a peaceful life:
My brother is a soldier—my sister dead.
I had, God knows it, my full share of trouble
With her, poor little thing! but I would gladly
Go through the whole again, I loved it so.

FAUST.

If it resembled you, it was an angel.

MARGARET.

I brought it up, and dearly did it love me,
For it was born after my father's death;
And so ill was she, at her lying-in,
That my mother, too, was given up for lost,
And only got about by slow degrees;
So she could not suckle the poor helpless baby,
And I nursed it all myself, and gave it pap;
And thus the child became, as 'twere, my own,
Clung round my neck, and smiled, and sprawled, and grew,
Slept in my arms, and rested on my bosom.

FAUST.

In this you felt, no doubt, the purest joy?

MARGARET.

And many an anxious hour, I do assure you.
The little creature's cradle stood, at night,
By my bed-side, so that it could scarce move

Digitized by Google

Without my being wakened, and, to hush it,
I had often got to take it into bed,
Or sometimes, even, to rise and give it food,
And walk about, and dance it up and down;
Besides all this, I had to get up early,
And stand at the washing-tub, and clean the house,
And cook, and go to market, and what not.
Thus was it, day by day; and you may guess,
With such a life, one sometimes gets low spirits;
But food and rest are enjoyed the more for it.

[*They pass on.*

MARTHA.

Aye, the poor women have the worst of it:
Old bachelors are very hard to convert.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

It but depends on such an one as you
To teach me better.

MARTHA.

Now tell me candidly,
Have you ne'er met *any* one that struck your fancy?
Have you never felt a real attachment, Sir?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

The proverb calls a fireside of one's own,
And a good wife, equal to pearls and gold.

MARTHA.

Have you never felt a preference, I mean?

Digitized by Google

MEPHISTOPHELES.

In general, I've been very well received.

MARTHA.

But what I wished to ask of you was this:
Was your heart never seriously affected?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

One should not venture to pass jokes with ladies.

MARTHA.

Ah! but you do not understand me, Sir.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

I'm sorry for it; but I understand—
That you are very kind. [*They pass on.*

FAUST.

You knew me then, again, you little angel,
The very instant I came into the garden?

MARGARET.

Ah! you observed how I cast down my eyes.

FAUST.

And you forgive the liberty I took—
My bold assurance—as you left the church?

MARGARET.

I was thunderstruck: I'd never known such thing.
No one can say aught bad of me, I thought;
Surely he can have noticed nothing bold,
Or unmaidenly, about me? yet it seemed
That something struck him with the sudden thought,

Digitized by Google

'There needs no ceremony with this girl.'
Yet I must own to you, in spite of this
I felt—I know not what—begin to stir
Here, in your favour: vext enough I was
With myself, that I did not feel more angry
With you.

FAUST.

My sweetest love!

MARGARET.

Stay but a moment.

[*She plucks a star-flower, and picks the leaves off one by one.*

FAUST.

What is that for—a nosegay?

MARGARET.

No, a game.

FAUST.

How?

MARGARET.

Go! you'll laugh at me.

[*She picks off the leaves, and murmurs.*

FAUST.

What are you murmuring?

MARGARET (*half aloud*).

He loves me—loves me not;—

FAUST.

Heavenly enthusiast!

Digitized by Google

MARGARET (*continues*).

He loves me—not;—loves me—not;—

[*Plucking off the last leaf, with deep joy.*

He loves me!

FAUST.

He does, my child? Yes, let this flower-word
Be to thee as a judgment from the heavens.
He loves thee! Know'st thou the word's full import?
He loves thee! [*He takes both her hands.*

MARGARET.

I'm overcome.

FAUST.

Do not tremble!
Let my looks, and let this pressure of thy hands
Say what no words are able to express:
To plunge ourselves in one absorbing passion,
To feel a rapture that must be eternal—
Eternal! for its end would be despair.
End—end? no, no, away with such a thought.

[*Margaret presses his hands, frees herself, and runs off. He stands a moment in thought, and then follows her.*

MARTHA (*approaching*).

The evening's closing in.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Yes, we must say adieu.

Digitized by Google

MARTHA.

I'd ask you to stay longer if I could,
But 'tis such a wicked scandalizing place,
One would think that folks had nothing else to do
Than to gape and watch their neighbours' visitors,
And make ill-natured guesses at their business;
One gets talked of, be as careful as one will.
And our youthful couple?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Wanton butterflies!
They've flown up yonder walk.

MARTHA.

He seems quite fond of her.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

And she of him:
Such is the way of the world.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

A SUMMER-HOUSE.

MARGARET *runs in, gets behind the door, holds the tip of her finger to her lips, and peeps through a chink.*

MARGARET.

He comes!

FAUST.

Ah, rogue, to provoke me so! I've caught you!

[*He kisses her.*

MARGARET,

(*Embracing him, and returning the kiss.*)

Dearest of men! I love thee from my heart!

MEPHISTOPHELES *knocks.*

FAUST (*stamping*).

Who's there?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

A friend!

FAUST.

A brute!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

'Tis time to go.

Digitized by Google

MARTHA (*comes up*).

Yes, it is getting late, Sir.

FAUST.

May I not

Attend you home?

MARGARET.

My mother would——Farewell!

FAUST.

Must I then go? Farewell! farewell!

MARTHA.

Adieu!

MARGARET.

'Till our next and speedy meeting!

[*Faust and Mephistopheles exeunt.*

MARGARET.

Gracious God!

How many many things a man like this
Can think of! I'm so bashful and so fluttered
In his presence, and say yes to every thing.
I'm such a poor silly child, that I am sure
I cannot conceive what he finds in me.

Digitized by Google

FOREST AND CAVERN.

FAUST (*alone*).

Thou gav'st me, Spirit sublime, thou gav'st me all
That I have prayed for; nor hast thou in vain
Turned thy bright countenance in splendour to me.
Thou gav'st me glorious Nature for a kingdom;
Thou gav'st me power to feel her and enjoy.
Not mere cold wonder-visits thou permit'st me,
But dost not grudge that I, in her deep bosom,
Should dive, as in the bosom of a friend.
Thou causest all life's forms to pass before me,
And with my kindred in the silent thicket,
In the air and water, bringest me acquainted.
In the forest, when the tempest howls and shrieks,
And the swept mountain utters dirge-like moans,
As giant pines are bearing down each other,
With reeling stems and intertangled boughs,
Thou lead'st me to the sheltering cave, and there
Reveal'st to me those more mysterious wonders,
Of which my own breast is the earthly shrine.

Digitized by Google

When the clear moon, with gentle influence, rises,
From the dank copses, from the rocky chasms,
The silvery forms of ages past come forth,
And soften the harsh joy of contemplation.

But ah! nought perfect falls to the lot of man.
With the bliss that lifts me nearer, and still nearer
To the Gods, thou gav'st me a companion, who—
Though cold and insolent, though he degrades me
In my own eyes, and turns thy gifts to nought—
Hath made himself essential to my life;
Who feeds and fans a wild fire in my breast
For that loved image. Thus I reel from desire
To enjoyment, and midst enjoyment sicken for desire.

MEPHISTOPHELES *enters.*

MEPHISTOPHELES.

What! not yet weary of this kind of life?
For once and away, the thing may be well enough;
But now let's off again for something new.

FAUST.

I would you had something else to do, I swear,
Than thus to plague me in my happier hour.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Well, well! I'll take my leave, if you're in earnest.
A great loss, faith, such harsh ungracious company!
One has one's hands full, all the livelong day;

Digitized by Google

Nor what will please, nor what to let alone,
Is't possible to trace by your worship's nose.

FAUST.

That's just the tone! he'd claim thanks for worrying me.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Poor earth-child, what life wouldst have led without me?
Of fancy's crotchets I have long since cured you:
Pray, would you not already from this sphere,
But for me, have made your exit?——Why mope
Like an owl in caverns? Why, like a toad,
Squat amongst sodden moss and dripping stones!
Fine pastime, faith! The doctor clings to you still.

FAUST.

Couldst obtain the least glimpse of the new life-power
This wandering in the desert wins for me,
Thou'dst grudge me—Devil as thou art—my bliss.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

A most celestial pleasure it must be!
Wandering amongst these hills in dews and darkness;
In foolish ecstasy, clasping earth and heaven;
Up to a godhead puffing your vain self; [marrow;
With thronged forebodings, probing through earth's
Fancying the whole six days' work in your bosom;
Enjoying in proud might—I know not what;
Now in love's raptures o'erflowing into all,
Your earthly nature cast aside; and then,

Digitized by Google

The lofty intuition— [*With a gesture.*
I dare not say how—to burst.

FAUST.

Fie, fie upon you!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

That's not to your mind, then?
You to cry fie, in such a moral tone!
One must not name to chaste ears, what chaste hearts,
For all that, can't renounce; though, in good sooth,
I grudge you not the indulgence, now and then,
Of lying pretexts; but this won't last long.
Into your old course driven back already,
If it held, you would be fretted into madness,
Or suffer torturing horror. Enough of this!
Your lovely pet sits fretting there at home,
Where all now seems sordid and desolate;
Her love for you o'ermasters and absorbs her.
Her heart was a calm lake midst folding hills,
Fondly embracing and reflecting there
Its few small islets and its verdant marge;
But love's impetuous torrent hath o'erflowed
All the green spots her innocent childhood prized;
Whilst yours, that poured the turbid deluge there,
Was an Alpine river fed by melting snows,
Whose bed again is dry. Methinks, instead
Of sitting here, enthroned amongst old woods,

Digitized by Google

If you'd enact the part of a physician,
And see to cure the poor young monkey's love,
You'd cut a better figure, please your worship.
The time seems miserably long to her;
She stands for hours at her window, watching
The dark clouds rolling o'er the old town walls;
'Ah, were I a bird,' 's the burden of her song,
Through the long day and more than half the night;
Now rousing by an effort to seem cheerful;
Anon, relapsing into gloom and tears;
Now sobbing, now composed, to all appearance;
But still heart-stricken—love-sick!

FAUST.

Serpent, serpent!

MEPHISTOPHELES (*aside*).

'Twill do, I see: the bait takes: I shall catch you!

FAUST.

Reprobate! Tempter! take thyself away.
Name not that lovely woman: do not bring
The desire of enjoying her sweet person
Again before my half-distracted senses!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

What's to be done, then? She thinks you are off;
And, in a manner, so, in fact, you are.

FAUST.

I'm near her; but, were countless leagues between us,

Digitized by Google

I never can forget her nor forsake her;
I envy the very body of the Lord,
Even now, when her lips are touching it.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Bravo, my friend! I've often envied you
The young twin pair that flourish 'neath the roses.

FAUST.

Pander, begone!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Oh dear! I can't help laughing.
The God, whose whim created lad and lass,
Well understood the noble occupation
Of making opportunity as well.
But away—'tis all miserable glamour!
Your road towards your lady's chamber lies
At present, as I think, and not to death.

FAUST.

Let me kindle on her bosom! In her arms,
What are the joys of heaven? Do not I feel—
Unceasingly feel—her wretchedness?
Am I not the outcast, the homeless one,
The monster wandering without aim or rest,—
The torrent dashing on from rock to rock,
And urged in foaming fury towards the precipice?
Beside which, in a lowly peaceful cot,
Surrounded by its own green Alpine field,

Digitized by Google

She dwells in child-like singleness of heart,
That little world embracing all her cares.
And I—the abhorred of God!—'tis not enough
To dash at the bare rocks and shatter them!
Her quiet home, too, must be undermined!
Inexorable Hell demands this sacrifice.
Devil! I call on thee to help me shorten
The fearful pang! let what must be, be quickly!
Let her sad fate fall crushingly on mine—
Let's perish both together.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Now it stirs!
Now it boils up again! Away, you fool,
And comfort the poor girl! When such a noddle
Can spy no outlet, we're at the end for certain.
Health and long life to him who bears him bravely,
Say I. And yet on some occasions, too,
You have a fair spice of the devil in you.
But I know nothing in the world so insipid
As a devil who despairs.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

GRETCHEN'S ROOM.

GRETCHEN *alone, at her Spinning-wheel.*

[*Sings.*]

My peace is gone for ever:
  How heavy is my heart!—
It will return—no, never:
  For good and all, we part.

Where he is not, all seemeth
  Like the dark grave to me;
And the whole world but teemeth
  With hopeless misery.

I feel my poor head wandering,
  My thoughts grow crazed and dim,
By too intensely pondering
  For ever upon him.

My peace is gone for ever:
  How heavy is my heart!—

Digitized by Google

It will return—no, never:
For good and all, we part.

Long hours at the window moping,
For him I sit and watch;
If I e'er leave home, 'tis hoping
Some glimpse of him to catch.

They haunt me hour by hour—
His noble form and mein;
Of his eyes, the spell-like power;
Of his lips, the smile serene.

His voice, the sweetest measure
Of a magic flute, I wis;
Of his hands the thrilling pressure;
And ah! his maddening kiss!

My peace is gone for ever:
How heavy is my heart!—
It will return—no, never:
For good and all, we part.

My soul is ever yearning
Its idol to behold.
Ah! if once more retnrning,
These arms could round him fold!

Digitized by Google

All cares, all censures spurning—
With raptures uncontrolled,
By kisses long and burning
My deep love should be told.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

MARTHA'S GARDEN.

MARGARET, FAUST.

MARGARET.

Promise me, Henry!

FAUST.

Aught that's in my power.

MARGARET.

Do, pray, then tell me candidly your feelings
As to religion: you're kind and good, I know;
But still I fear you don't think much of that.

FAUST.

My darling, let us choose some other theme.
You know, you feel, how ardently I love you—
That I'd lay down my life for my soul's idol;
Nor would I rob a single human being
Of the comfort his religious faith bestows.

MARGARET.

But that is not enough: one must believe!

FAUST.

Must one?

Digitized by Google

MARGARET.

Ah! if I'd any weight with you!
Besides, you don't respect the holy sacraments.

FAUST.

I do respect them.

MARGARET.

Yes, but not desire them.
To mass or to confession you've not been,
I fear, a long time. Do you believe in God?

FAUST.

My love—who dares say, 'I believe in God?'
Ask the question of philosopher or priest,
And the reply of either will be found
The merest mockery of the questioner.

MARGARET.

Then you do not believe?

FAUST.

Light of my eyes!
Mistake me not:
Who dares to name Him, and declare
I believe in Him?
To feel, and say
I do not believe in Him?
The All-encompassing,
The All-upholding,
Encompasses He not,

Digitized by Google

Upholds He not,
Thee, me, Himself?
Bends not yon heaven o'er us?
Spreads not the firm earth round?
Shed not the eternal stars,
From on high, their friendly light?
Into each others' eyes are we not looking?
Throngs not the whole
Round thy head and heart,
About thee, invisibly, visibly, in eternal mystery weaving?
Let thy heart, capacious as it is,
Be fraught with it;
And in the feeling, when thou 'rt wholly blest,
Give it what name thou wilt,—
Joy! heart! love! God!
I have no name for it!
Feeling is all in all;
Names, sound and vapour,
Dimming the glow of heaven.

MARGARET.

That is all very beautiful and good:
What the priest says has nearly the same meaning,
But with some small addition to the words.

FAUST.

'Tis uttered in all places, by all hearts—
Each in its own appropriate language, too:
Why not befittingly in mine?

Digitized by Google

MARGARET.

It may be;
Yet for all that there's something wrong about it,
For you've not Christian faith.

FAUST.

My dearest child!

MARGARET.

Oh! it does grieve me so, you cannot think,
To see the company you keep.

FAUST.

And why?

MARGARET.

The man I see you with—Oh, God! how hateful!
It makes me shudder to my inmost soul
To look at his repulsive countenance!
Nothing through life e'er gave me such a heart-stab.

FAUST.

Don't be afraid of him, my little darling.

MARGARET.

It makes my very blood creep when I see him.
For every body else I have kind feelings;
But, much—Heaven knows how much!—as I oft long
For you, I feel an unaccountable dread
Of that man's coming with you; and besides,
I can't help thinking that he is a rogue.
May God forgive me if I do him wrong!

Digitized by Google

FAUST.

Such oddities there must be, notwithstanding.

MARGARET.

I would not live with the like of him for worlds!
Whene'er he comes and looks in at the door,
With that cold, sneering, and malicious face,
One sees that he can sympathize with nothing;—
That he can never love one human soul.
I abandon myself, wholly, in thy arms,
To joy, I feel so unrestrained—so glowing;
And his vile presence closes up my heart.

FAUST.

My dear misgiving angel! how you talk!

MARGARET.

It overcomes me, love, to that degree,
That, whensoe'er it chances that he joins us,
I feel as if I loved e'en you no longer;
I never, in his presence, should be able
To pray,—this makes me feel so sick at heart;
You, too, must feel the same, my dearest Henry?

FAUST.

You've some antipathy.

MARGARET.

I must go now.

FAUST.

And shall I never, even for one brief hour,

Digitized by Google

Recline on that soft bosom undisturbed,
Press heart to heart, and soul to soul?—how fondly!

MARGARET.

Ah! if I did but sleep alone, this night—
This very night—I'd leave the door unbarred;
But my mother is so easily awaked;
And I should die on the spot, were she to catch us.

FAUST.

You need not be in fear of that, my angel:
Here is a phial, from which if you but pour
Three drops, in her accustomed beverage,
She will be gently lulled to soundest sleep.

MARGARET.

Ah, what would I not venture for your sake!
It will not do her the least harm, I trust?

FAUST.

My dear! would I let you use it, if it could?

MARGARET.

I know not what 'tis, dearest, best of men!
That, if I only look at you, compels me
To do whate'er you wish; but I've already
Gone so far for your sake, that next to nothing,
God knows it, now remains for me to grant. [*Exit.*

MEPHISTOPHELES *enters.*

MEPHISTOPHELES.

The silly little monkey! Is she gone?

Digitized by Google

FAUST.

Hast thou been playing the spy again, as usual?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

I heard what passed between you, plain enough.
Catechised, Doctor, hey? Much good may't do thee.
The girls *are* deeply interested, that's certain,
In knowing if a man be a believer
After the good old fashion; for, say they
To themselves, if he's conformable in that,
He'll also be conformable to us.

FAUST.

Thou, monster as thou art, canst not conceive
What passes in the heart of this fond angel:
Possessing that faith which is all-sufficient
For her own happiness, a sacred horror
Thrills her, to think she cannot choose but deem
The man that's dearest to her a lost soul.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Why, thou superlatively sensual rake,
A chit of a girl, then, leads thee by the nose!

FAUST.

Thou vile abortion of dirt and fire!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

She is knowing, too, in physiognomy,
And in my presence feels—she knows not how.
This mask, it seems, betrays some hidden sense;

Digitized by Google

She feels that I'm a genius, most assuredly—
Perhaps the Devil himself. Tonight, then——?

FAUST.

What's that to thee?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

I have my pleasure in't, though!

Digitized by Google

AT THE WELL.

GRETCHEN *and* BESSY, *with pitchers.*

BESSY.

HAVE you heard about Barbara?

GRETCHEN.

Not a word:
I scarcely, now, go anywhere from home.

BESSY.

Sibylla told me of the whole today.
A fine fool she has made herself at last!
This comes from setting up for a fine lady!

GRETCHEN.

How so?

BESSY.

A bad affair, I promise you.
Now, there are two fed when she eats and drinks.

GRETCHEN.

Ah!

BESSY.

Yes, I assure you; and it serves her right.

Digitized by Google

How vain she was, you know, of her good looks!
And how long she's been hanging on the lad!
Accepting all his presents without shame;
For ever jaunting with him, here and there,
To merry-makings, junkettings, and revels:
Such treats of cakes and wine! such hugs and kisses!
She must be first at every thing, be sure!
Until at length the virgin flower is torn.

GRETCHEN.

Poor thing!

BESSY.

Why, surely you don't pity her?
Our mothers kept the like of us to spinning,
And never let us go out of a night;
Whilst she was gallivanting with her sweetheart,
Gossipping in the porch, or, arm in arm,
Taking their walks, and thinking time too short.
But now she must do penance for't i' the church.

GRETCHEN.

Surely, he'll make the foolish girl his wife?

BESSY.

He won't be such a fool, I warrant him:
A smart young fellow, with the world before him!
Besides, he's off!

GRETCHEN.

That is not acting fair.

Digitized by Google

BESSY.

But if she gets him it won't be in peace.
The lads will surely tear her garland for her,
And we girls strew chopped straw before the door.

[*Exit.*

GRETCHEN (*on her way home*).

How readily could I revile too, once,
If a poor maiden chanced to make a slip!
I could not find words bad enough to use,
Methought, in speaking of another's shame.
Then, too, I blessed myself and felt so proud!
But now, I am a prey to sin myself!
And yet, Oh God! how good, how love-like, all
That drove me to this pass!

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

ORATORY.

In the niche of the wall a devotional Image of the MATER DOLOROSA, *with Flower-pots before it.*

MARGARET.

[*Places fresh flowers in the pots.*]

DIVINE one, full of pain,
Do not my prayer disdain;
Graciously look on my distress and shame.

The sabre at thy heart,
A thousand keen pangs smart,
As thou look'st up to thy son, vilely slain.
To his dread Sire, with sighs
That pierce the vaulted skies,
For his and thy distress thou pleadest, nor in vain.

Oh, who could e'er conceive,
Oh, who would e'er believe,

Digitized by Google

The agony, the tortures, that I feel?
But how my poor heart throbs
With deep convulsive sobs,
Thou know'st, and thou alone: to thee I kneel!

Where'er I turn or go,
Woe, woe—the demon woe—
Clings, with dire fangs, within my bosom here!
The moment I'm alone,
Could bitter tears atone,
The bursting flood would wash the vile stain clear.

My flower-pots in a row,
That I once treasured so,—
Before the window of my humble room,
I shed tears o'er each one,
When, at the rising sun,
I culled for thee those flowers of choice perfume.

Ah! when his early rays
Did through the casement blaze,
They roused me not from light sleep, as of yore;
But found me, torn by dread,
Upsitting in my bed,
Reft of that peace which I shall know no more.

Digitized by Google

Divine one, full of pain,
Do not my prayer disdain;
Graciously look on my agony and pain.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

NIGHT.

Street before Gretchen's door.

VALENTINE (*a soldier, Gretchen's brother*).

ONCE, when I made one midst a jovial set,
And gay young fellows, fond of showing off,
Would extol the merits of their favourite lasses,
And claim to have them toasted all around,
I've calmly sat, with elbows on the board,
Heard all their boasts, and then, bumper in hand,
Have stroked my beard and said, All well enough,
But can you name a girl in the whole country
That to my sister's fit to hold a candle?
Here's to my Gretchen—good as she is fair!
Hob-a-nob—cling-clang—around goes the toast!
And shouts of, He is right! she is the rose
Of her sex! And the boasters have been mute.
But now—I could tear my hair up by the roots,
Or run my head against the wall, for vexation:—
Now shall I be for ever plagued and taunted
With sneers and scurvy jokes, by every blockhead!

Digitized by Google

I shall sit, like one that owes beyond his means,
Sweating at every chance word that escapes;
And, although I might thrash them into silence,
I could not say they lied.——But who comes there?
Who slinks this way? Two, or my eyes deceive me.
If 'tis the fellow, here's at him at once:
He shall not leave this spot alive, by God!

FAUST, MEPHISTOPHELES.

FAUST.

See how the light of that ever-burning lamp
Is flickering through the window of the sacristy,
Throwing, on either side, a feebler gleam,
As the darkness thickens round it! Even so,
A night-like gloom is spreading in my breast.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

And I feel like a languishing tom-cat
That scales the walls and sneaks around the eaves:
I feel quite virtuous here, with just a dash
Of wantonness and thievish inclination.
Thus does the glorious Walpurgis night
Already thrill through every limb of me;
Two days hence, it comes round to us again:
There one really knows what purpose one's awake for!

FAUST.

But, meantime, can that be the treasure rising—

Digitized by Google

That casket, which I see glimmering yonder?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

To lift its lid up, you'll soon have the pleasure.
I took a squint at it a short time since:
Capital lion-dollars in 't there are.

FAUST.

And not a single trinket? not a ring
To deck my lovely mistress?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

I rather think
I did see some such thing as a pearl necklace?

FAUST.

That's right! Whene'er I go without a present
To my darling girl, I always feel regret.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

You ought not to regret some pleasure gratis.
Now that the heavens with stars are thickly studded,
I'll treat your ears with a true piece of art—
I'll sing your best-beloved a moral song,
To make a fool of her with greater certainty.

[*He sings to the guitar.*]

Why, Catherine, stand'st thou, Catherine,
By thy lover's door at break of day?
Shy Catherine! youthful Catherine!
Know'st thou not that all men betray?

Digitized by Google

Fie, Catherine, simple Catherine!
Enter there as a maid you may—
Try, Catherine, buxom Catherine—
A maid you will never come away.

I, Catherine, dearest Catherine!
I, in the world's affairs grown grey,
Spy, Catherine, artless Catherine!
The spoiler lurking for his prey.

Fly, Catherine! lovely Catherine!
Let not a sweetheart have his way—
Bye, Catherine! good bye, Catherine!—
'Till the ring's on your finger, pray.

VALENTINE (*comes forward*).

Whom lurest thou here? Thou accursed rat-catcher!
To the Devil with the instrument, in the first place!
In the next, to the Devil with the singer!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Whew! the guitar is smashed in a thousand shivers!
'Tis all up with the poor guitar.

VALENTINE.

Now then
For smashing skulls next!

MEPHISTOPHELES (*to Faust*).

Don't you give way, Doctor!

Digitized by Google

Courage! stick firm, man! Do as I advise:
Out with your rapier—thrust away—I'll parry.

VALENTINE.

Parry that!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

And why not?

VALENTINE.

That, too!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

To be sure!

VALENTINE.

I believe the Devil's fighting! How is this?
My hand is getting powerless already.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Thrust home!

VALENTINE (*falls*).

Oh God!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

The clown's tamed now. But away!
Let's make ourselves scarce in the twinkling of an eye!
For there's a cry of murder raised already.
I'm on terms with the police: yet the ban of blood
Is not a thing so easily adjusted.

MARTHA (*from the window*).

Be off! be off, with your noises!

Digitized by Google

GRETCHEN (*from the window*).

Bring a light!

MARTHA (*as before*).

They're fighting, scuffling, screeching, and abusing!

THE PEOPLE.

Here one is lying, and quite dead already.

MARTHA (*coming out*).

Have the murderers got away?

GRETCHEN (*coming out*).

Who's lying here?

PEOPLE.

Your mother's son.

GRETCHEN.

Almighty God! what misery!

VALENTINE.

I'm dying! that's soon said, and sooner done.
What are you women howling at? Come near,
And hear what I've to say.

[*All come round him.*

My Gretchen! you're still young and inexperienced;
You're not yet up to things, and manage ill:
I advise you seriously, and once for all—
Since you *are* a whore, to be one in good earnest.

GRETCHEN.

My brother! gracious God! what do you mean?

Digitized by Google

VALENTINE.

Gretchen, leave God's name unprofaned. What's done
Can't, now, be undone: things must take their course.
You begin, in secret, with one paramour:
Once broken in, others will quickly follow;
And, by the time a dozen have enjoyed you,
You'll be on the town.

When shame is first brought forth into the world,
Her birth is always cautiously concealed,
And, head and ears, she's wrapped in the cloak of night.
Aye, folks would fain stifle the ugly brat!
Which, notwithstanding, grows in strength and stature,
And soon walks flauntingly in the open day;
And still, the uglier her face becomes,
Courts observation more.

You strumpet! I already see the time
When every decent citizen will shun you,
As he would an infected corpse!
When they look you in the face, your heart will sink!
No golden chain you'll ever wear again:
You'll never stand before the altar more!
Nor take pride, at the dance, in a fair lace collar.

In some dark den of misery you'll hide,
Crouching 'mongst beggars and diseased cripples;
And, even should God forgive you, upon earth
You'll live an accursed thing!

Digitized by Google

MARTHA.

Commend your soul to the mercy of your God!
What! heap on your precious soul the sin of slander!

VALENTINE.

Could I but once get at thy withered body,
Thou shameless bawd! I, then, should feel no doubt
Of obtaining a full pardon for my sins.

GRETCHEN.

Oh, my brother! Oh, this burning hell-pang!

VALENTINE.

I say, have done with shedding useless tears!
You gave me the deepest heart-stab of them all
When you gave maiden honour to the winds.
I go, through the sleep of death, unto my God—
A soldier, and a brave one to the last. [*He dies.*

Digitized by Google

CATHEDRAL.

Service, Organ and Hymn.

GRETCHEN, *amongst a crowd of people:* EVIL SPIRIT, *behind* GRETCHEN.

EVIL SPIRIT.

How different, Gretchen! ah, how different
It was with thee, when, pure and innocent,
Thou camest to the altar here,
And, from that guileless nook
Thy bosom, then the shrine
Of thoughts half sportive, half divine,
Didst take that little well-worn book,
And didst repeat each holy prayer
With feelings artless and sincere.
Gretchen! what thoughts distract thy brain?
Which crime is at thy heart?
For thy mother pray'st thou, who, to long long pain,
Did through that sleep depart?
Whose blood may that, upon thy threshold, be?—
Stirs it not now, forebodingly?
Does it not make thee start,

Digitized by Google

In agony,
That quickening being near thy heart?

GRETCHEN.

Oh, misery! Oh, that I could drive away
Those fearful thoughts, that will come over me—
That, in spite of all, will come across me!

CHORUS.

DIES IRÆ, DIES ILLA,
SOLVET SÆCLUM IN FAVILLA.

[*The organ plays.*

EVIL SPIRIT.

Horrors o'er thee creep!
Sounds the trumpet dread,
Arousing all the dead!
From its ashy sleep,
Thy trembling heart doth leap
To conscious life again,
To suffer fiery pain!

GRETCHEN.

Oh, would that I were far away from hence!
I feel as if the organ choked my breath—
As if the anthem melted my heart away.

CHORUS.

JUDEX, ERGO, CUM SEDEBIT,
QUIDQUID LATET ADPAREBIT;
NIL INULTUM REMANEBIT.

Digitized by Google

GRETCHEN.

I feel so thronged! the pillars close around me!
The roof is pressing down on me!—Air! light!

EVIL SPIRIT.

Hide thyself from misery!
But sin—but shame may not be hidden;
'Tis forbidden.
Air? light? Woe, woe to thee!

CHORUS.

QUID SUM MISER TUNC DICTURUS?
QUEM PATRONUM ROGATURUS?
CUM VIX JUSTUS SIT SECURUS.

EVIL SPIRIT.

The glorified, the pure,
May not endure
Thy presence: shuddering, they
From a polluted outcast turn away.

CHORUS.

QUID SUM MISER TUNC DICTURUS?

GRETCHEN.

Goody! your hartshorn bottle——

[*She swoons away.*

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

WALPURGIS NIGHT.

The Hartz Mountains. District of Schirke and Elend.

FAUST, MEPHISTOPHELES.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

DON'T you long for a broom-stick? I'd be glad
Of the very roughest he-goat in existence.
We're far from the journey's end, by this road, still.

FAUST.

This knotted stick is help enough for me:
I'm fresh upon my legs; nor do I wish
A shorter road. To wind through pleasant vales,
To climb rocks, where the fresh springs bubble up
And leap from ledge to ledge, is quite delightful!
Spring is already weaving 'mongst the birches,
And even the pine-trees feel her quickening spirit:
Should it not stimulate our bodies too?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Nothing of such an influence do I feel:
My body is all wintry, and I'd rather
Have frost and snow on my path. How mournfully
The unfilled disk of the red moon ascends,

Digitized by Google

So late, and so dim withal, that one keeps stumbling,
At every step, against some rock or tree!
I'll call a Will-o'-the-wisp, with your permission:
I see one blazing cheerily in the fen.
Holloa, there, friend! why flare away to waste?
Hither, and light us up the mountain path!

WILL-O'-THE-WISP.

I trust I shall be able to control
My natural versatility, and show
The very great respect I bear your worship;
But ours is, commonly, a zig-zag course.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Ho, ho! and so you think to imitate men!
But go straight forward, in the Devil's name!
Or else I'll blow your flickering life out, for you.

WILL-O'-THE-WISP.

I clearly see that you are master here,
And will right cheerfully do my best to suit
Your humour; but I pray you, bear in mind
The mountain's being magic-mad tonight,
And, if a Will-o'-the-wisp's to lead the way,
I hope you won't be too particular.

MEPHISTOPHELES, FAUST, WILL-O'-THE-WISP.

(*In alternate song.*)

We have entered enchantment's dreamy sphere.
Win praise as our guide on this wild career;

Digitized by Google

Into the heart of this wide realm, tonight,
Lead us timely, and lead us aright.

See trees after trees moving rapidly by!
And, as past us they fly,
The cliffs, how they bow, as if paying us court!
And the long-snouted rocks, how they blow and snort!

Thorough stones, thorough green turf, the brooks hurry on.
What rustling is that? Do I hear a sweet song,
A love-plaint, reminding of days that are gone?
What we're fond of, we hope for! Echo sends the sound back,
Like a dream of past bliss, o'er this desolate track.

Nearer and nearer, Too whoo! too whoo!
Chanteth the owl; and the lapwing too,
And the screaming jay: have they kept awake?
Are those salamanders, in yonder brake,
With pottle bellies, long legs, and claws?
And snake-like roots 'thwart the pathway grope,
From each rock-rift and chasm and gravelly slope;
As if into some huge polype's jaws [arms,
'Twere to drag folks, they stretch forth their monstrous
Wreathed into strange contorted forms,
All speckled with dark and bright;

Digitized by Google

And mice, many-coloured, that cross and recross
By myriads, frisking through heath and through moss;
And fire-flies, wheeling in countless swarms,
And perplexing us with their light.

But say, are we moving, or standing still?
For things seem to whirl round like the vanes of a mill:
The trees and the rocks, that are making strange faces,
And the Will-o'-the wisps, that get thicker and thicker,
And swell themselves out, and flit quicker and quicker—
Restless imps, momently changing their places.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Grasp my skirt firmly! Here's a central peak,
Whence one admires to see how Mammon glows
Within the mountain.

FAUST.

What a strange
And melancholy light, like the red dawn,
Gleams through the rocky gorges, and pervades
The very inmost chasms of the precipice!
Here a mist rises, there float exhalations;
Here the glow sparkles out of gauzy vapour,
There glides along in a fine thread-like line,
And there, again, it jets up like a fountain;
Yonder it flows in one continuous track,
Sending a hundred off-sets through the vale,

Digitized by Google

And there, again, compressed within a nook,
Reboundingly disperses, all at once,
Like a shower of golden sand. But see!
The rock's face is on fire, through its whole height.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Doth not Sir Mammon make a grand display,
And light up splendidly, for this high festival?
'Tis lucky that you've seen it, for I scent
The boisterous guests, already.

FAUST.

How the storm-blast raves!
What violent thumps it gives one on the neck!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

You must grasp hold firmly of the mountain's ribs,
Or 'twill hurl you down the abyss. The night thickens.
Hark! what a crashing thorough the whole forest!
The owls fly scared away. Hark, how the columns
Of these ever-verdant palaces are splintering!
Hark! to the snapping boughs, the groaning trunks,
The uptearing roots, that stretch and creak and screech!
Down, down, in dire confusion on each other,
The tempest lays all prostrate, and howls on,
And whines, and hisses round the wreck-strown cliffs!
Hear'st thou sounds in the air?
Now distant—now near?
Aye, a mad magic-song
Streams the whole mountain along!

Digitized by Google

THE WITCHES (*in chorus*).

Up to the Brocken the witches fly!
The stubble is yellow, the corn is green.
Thither the mighty multitude hie.
On the topmost peak is Sir Urien seen.
On they go, over stone, over stock,
. . . . the witch . . . . the buck.

VOICES.

Old Mother Baubo is coming now,
All alone on a farrowing sow.

CHORUS.

To whom honour is due, pay honour!
Make way, there, ho!
For Mother Baubo.
A worthy sow, and Mother upon her.
On, Mother, before us,
And head the witch chorus.

VOICE.

Which way didst climb?

VOICE.

Over Ilsenstein!
I peeped into the owl's nest there:
She gave me a stare!

VOICE.

What a rate, old cat,
You are driving at!

Digitized by Google

VOICE.

She has grazed my thigh,
As she whizzed by.
Look what a scratch:
The vile old wretch!

WITCHES (*chorus*).

The way is long, the way is broad,
But what a mad throng crowds the road!
Scratches the besom, and sticks the prong,
As we hurry along,
Helter-skelter, who shall be first.
Infants are stifled, mothers burst.

WIZARDS (*half chorus*).

Whilst we creep along, like a snail with his house,
Far before us the women go, canty and crouse;
In a race to the evil ones we have no chance,
They are ever a thousand steps in advance.

THE OTHER HALF.

That's not precisely the proper view.
Woman takes a thousand steps, 'tis true;
But haste as she may, 'twill still be found,
Man clears the space at a single bound.

VOICES (*above*).

Come with us, come with us, from Felsensee!

VOICES (*from below*).

Up to you would we mount with glee.

Digitized by Google

But, though washed and thoroughly clean we be,
We're condemned to eternal sterility.

BOTH CHORUSES.

The winds are charmed to rest, the shot-stars glide,
The melancholy moon is glad to hide;
And, as it whizzes on, the magic choir
Sputter forth countless sparks of lurid fire.

VOICE (*from below*).

Stay, stay!

VOICE (*from above*).

Who, from the cleft of the rock, calls stay?

VOICE (*from below*).

Take me, take me with you, I pray!
Three centuries I've toiled without reaching the top.
I'd fain be amongst you: stop, pray stop!

BOTH CHORUSES.

The besom, the fork, the stick doth bear,
And eke the he-goat, aloft through the air.
Tonight, lost for ever is he who can't climb.

DEMI-WITCH (*below*).

I've been tottering after a weary time,
And they, already, so far ahead!
I can neither rest here nor at home in bed.

CHORUS OF WITCHES.

Anoint! 'tis the salve gives us pluck to mount;
Any rag makes a sail, any trough, we count

Digitized by Google

A good ship to launch on the tides of the sky;
Tonight, who flies not never will fly.

BOTH CHORUSES.

As ye round the mountain's head
Check your swift career,
Witchcraft's host, and widely spread
O'er the wild heath here.

[*They let themselves down.*

MEPHISTOPHELES.

There's crowding and pushing, there's clattering and rustling!
There's whizzing and twirling, there's babbling and bustling!
There's sparkling and blinking! there's burning and stinking!
There, what noble materials are blent!
Ah, this is the true witch-element!
But stick by me, or we shall be parted
In a moment.—Ho! whither hast started?

FAUST (*in the distance*).

Here!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

What! borne off so far already?
I must exert my paramount authority. [folks!—
Make way!—Sir Voland, friends!—make way, good
Doctor, take hold of me, and at a bound

Digitized by Google

We'll get clear of this crowd: 'tis even too mad
For such as I am.—Some peculiar light
Seems to be shining in the jungle, yonder;
I feel incited to explore that place.
Come on—we'll just peep in there—come along.

FAUST.

Spirit of contradiction!—Well! go on,
And, wheresoe'er it leadeth, I will follow.
A sage scheme truly, I must needs confess,
To mount the Brocken on Walpurgis night,
And isolate ourselves when we get there.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

See, do but see, what parti-coloured flames!
A cozy club is met together here.
One does not feel so lonely 'mongst a few.

FAUST.

I should prefer being in the stir above, though!
Where flame and eddying smoke, ev'n now, I see.
Yonder the multitude throngs round the evil one;
Many a curious problem must be solved there.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

And many a curious problem spawned there, too.
Pray let the great world rave on as it will:
In this snug nook we'll house ourselves in peace.
To chalk out little worlds within the great,
Wherein to enjoy one's self's the good old plan.—

Digitized by Google

Yonder I spy young witches, with their persons
Temptingly bare, and prudent old ones covered.
Be guided, now, by me, and you shall find
The trouble little and the sport abundant.
I hear the noise of piping instruments!
Confound the jangle! but one must endure it.
Come on! come on!—I see it needs must be—
Come, and I'll introduce you, which you'll own
As laying you under a fresh obligation.
What say you, eh! no trifling space, friend, this!
Do but behold! as far as eye can reach
Hundreds of bonfires blazing all a-row!
And countless crowds around them, dancing, cooking,
Love-making, drinking! Where, I wish to know,
Where can there aught exceeding this be found?

FAUST.

On introducing us, do you intend
To present yourself as a conjuror, or a devil?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Though usually in strict incognito,
On gala-days one likes to show one's orders.
I've not the honour to display the Garter,
But the Horse-foot claims high distinction here.
Do you see the snail here creeping up to us?
Even now she pokes out who I am by her feelers.
If I would, I could not here deny myself.

Digitized by Google

But come along! we'll go from fire to fire.
I'll be the pimp, and you shall be the gallant.

[*To persons who sit round some expiring embers.*]

Old gentlemen, what are you doing here,
Quite at one end? How much more praiseworthy
'Twould be, to get in the midst—in the very thick
Of the rioting and youthful revelry;
One's surely quite enough alone, when home.

GENERAL.

Let none put trust in the gratitude of nations!
However great their services have been,
'Tis with the multitude as with the sex,
Youthful pretenders gain the upper hand.

MINISTER.

The young folks of the present day are wide—
Are very wide—astray from the right path.
The people of the good old school for me!
Ah! that was verily the golden age,
When our authority was all in all.

PARVENU.

Nor were we fools, nor over-scrupulous, either,
As to what ought or ought not to be done;
But just as things were ordered to our mind
Came an unexpected stir and upset all.

AUTHOR.

Who now-a-days—to speak it a general way—

Digitized by Google

Read works that cause them the least mental labour?
As for the rising generation, they
Are an empty, flimsy, self-sufficient set.

MEPHISTOPHELES,

(*who all at once appears very old*).

Yes, yes, the folks are ripe for doomsday, all!
'Tis the last visit I shall ever pay
To the witch-mountain; my own cask runs thick,
So to the dregs, doubtless, the world is come, too.

A HUCKSTERING WITCH.

Do not pass by in this way, gentlemen!
Now is your time to make a famous bargain!
I've wares of all sorts well worth your attention;
Yet nought but hath its fellow upon earth—
That hath not, to mankind and to the world,
Wrought some peculiar mischief in its time.
No dagger here, from whence blood hath not flowed;
No cup, that hath not poured consuming poison
Into some healthy body; trinket none,
That hath not brought some lovely maid to shame;
No sword, that hath not severed some dear tie,
Or stabbed, perchance, some rival from behind.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Cousin! you understand the times but ill.
Done, happened! pho, pho! happened, done, indeed!
Traffic in novelties; they're the only things

Digitized by Google

That have the least attraction, I assure you.

FAUST.

What a fair! if I can but keep my senses!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

On the crowd pushes, ever onward! onward!
You think to push, and you get pushed yourself.

FAUST.

Who may that be?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Mark her well! that's Lilith.

FAUST.

Who?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Adam's first wife: of her fair locks beware;
Beware the ornament in which she shines
Pre-eminent. When she ensnares a youth,
She does not let him off so very easy.

FAUST.

There are an old one and a young one sitting;
But the jades have already danced till they are jaded.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Dancing hath neither stop nor stay tonight.
There's a new one just beginning; let's chime in!

FAUST (*dancing with the young one*).

I had a fair dream once upon a time;
In it I saw an apple tree, whereon,

Digitized by Google

Two lovely apples tempted me; I climbed.

THE FAIR ONE.

From Paradise, downward, men have always been
Extremely fond of apples. I'm most happy
To say my garden also bears such fruit.

MEPHISTOPHELES (*with the old one*).

I had a wild dream once upon a time;
And in it there appeared a rifted tree;
It had a . . . . . .
To . . . . . but it pleased me for all that.

THE OLD ONE.

My service to the knight with the horse's foot.
Let him have a . . . . . ready,
If he . . . . . fears not.

PROCTOPHANTASMIST.

You confounded mob! how dare you venture?
Have we not long since proved, to demonstration,
That spirits never stand on human feet?
Yet actually, notwithstanding this,
You're dancing here as other mortals do!

THE FAIR ONE (*dancing*).

Why comes he to our ball, then?

FAUST (*dancing*).

Oh! he's every where.
We come to dance, he, to criticize the dancing.
Unless he talked of every step that's made,

Digitized by Google

The step were just as well not made at all.
He's most annoyed if folks advance straight forward:
If you will only move round in a circle
Like him, in his old mill, he'll call that right
And praise you, I've no doubt; especially
If you advise with him upon the subject.

PROCTOPHANTASMIST.

You're here, then, still! what an unheard-of thing!
But vanish! we've enlightened all the world!—
That Devil's pack to rules pay no attention;
Though we're so wise, Tegel is haunted still.
How long have I been sweeping with my broom
To cleanse the earth from all such kind of rubbish;
And 'tis not ridded yet!—what an unheard-of thing!

THE FAIR ONE.

Have done with wearying us, at all events.

PROCTOPHANTASMIST.

I tell you plainly to your faces, spirits:
I'll not endure spiritual despotism,
Being what I cannot exercise myself.

[*The dancing goes on.*]

I see that I shall not succeed tonight;
But, as I'm always ready for a start,
Whene'er I see a chance, I live in hopes
Of beating both the devils and the poets
Before I start on my last earthly journey.

Digitized by Google

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Now will he forthwith go and seat himself—
Being his mode of seeking consolation,
Whenever he is vext—amidst some puddle,
To let the leeches feast upon his rump,
And thus get cured of spirits, and spirit too.

[*To Faust, who has left the dance.*]

But wherefore do you leave the pretty girl
Who sang to you so sweetly in the dance?

FAUST.

I saw a red mouse leap from out her mouth,
In the middle of the song.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Suppose you did?
One must not be too nice about mere trifles.
'Twas very well the mouse was not a grey one.
Who in the hour of enjoyment cares
For such things?

FAUST.

Then I saw—

MEPHISTOPHELES.

What did you see?

FAUST.

Mephisto, do you see yon pale fair girl,
Standing alone, and far from all the rest?
She drags herself reluctantly away,

Digitized by Google

And seems to move as if her feet were fettered.
How strongly she resembles my dear Gretchen!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Dismiss the fancy! it can bring no good.
That is a mere creation of enchantment—
Lifeless—an idol; 'tis not well to meet it;
Man's blood gets frozen by its freezing glance.—
Of course you've heard the story of Medusa?

FAUST.

Aye, verily they are a corpse's eyes,
Which there was no affectionate hand to close!
That is the sweet form Gretchen yielded me!
That the soft bosom I have pressed to mine!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

I tell you, easily deluded fool!
That *that* is sorcery: to every one,
The semblance of his own beloved she wears.

FAUST.

What bliss! what torture! From that piteous look
I cannot take my eyes. That lovely neck
How strangely does a single crimson line,
Not broader than a penknife's back, encircle!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Quite right! quite right! I see it now myself.
Since Perseus cut it off for her, she carries
Her head aneath her arm, whene'er she pleases.—

Digitized by Google

But fond as ever of delusion, still?
Do, prithee, follow up the hill with me,
Where all is gay and merry as the Prater!
And, if I'm not deluded too, I spy
A theatre: what have we going on here, then?

SERVIBILIS.

They'll begin afresh, almost immediately.
A new piece, Sir, the last of seven new pieces:
It is the custom here to give that number:
The piece is written by a dilettante,
And will be also played by dilettanti.
Excuse me, gentlemen, for business calls me:
The part assigned me, as a dilettante,
Is to draw the curtain up.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

To find you
On the Blocksberg meets my approbation:
This is a most appropriate place for you.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

WALPURGIS-NIGHT'S DREAM:

OR,

OBERON AND TITANIA'S GOLDEN WEDDING FEAST.

INTERMEZZO.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

WALPURGIS-NIGHT'S DREAM.

[*Intermezzo.*]

STAGE MANAGER.

This, as a day of rest, we hail,
We, gallant sons of Mieding.
Mountain old, and misty vale,
Is all the scene that's needing.

HERALD.

The wedding-feast of gold to be,
Requires half a century;
And if the quarrel should have ceased,
I shall be more pleased with the golden feast.

OBERON.

Now—when the Fairy King and Queen
Are re-united on the green—
Spirits! now's the time to show—
Are ye with me, aye or no?

PUCK.

When Puck, with a bound,
Comes and twirls himself round,
With frolicsome step in the dance,

Digitized by Google

Hundreds run after, with shouting and laughter;
A host of light spirits in Puck's train advance.

ARIEL.

In tones of heavenly purity,
Ariel breathes a delicate air;
Some trifling things, of a surety,
It lures, but it also lures the fair.

OBERON.

Ye married folks! would ye do what's rare—
Agree?
Take a lesson from us, a long-yoked pair,
In harmony;
Let a fond couple who, like the faithful dove
And his mate,
Would cherish mutual and unchanging love—
Separate.

TITANIA.

If the husband becomes humdrum,
And looks glum,
And the wife gets full of fidgets and whim,—
Send *him*,
Bear-hunting, to the northern ice
In a trice;
And off with *her*, where the green waves roll
Round the southern pole.

Digitized by Google

ORCHESTRA, TUTTI.

(*Fortissimo.*)

Flies' probosces,
Moskitos' noses,
And all their kin
Of various din;
Croaking frog in the thicket,
In the grass the cricket;
These form the band
At their graces' command.

SOLO.

See the bagpipe come,
A bubble freshly blown!
Snick, snack, sneck it goes,
Through its drowsy nose.

SPIRIT WHICH IS JUST FORMED.

Toad's belly, and spider's foot,
And duckling's wings, the imp to suit!
Not as an animalcula we show him—
But here's a little poem.

A LITTLE PAIR.

With short steps and vaulting capers,
On through honey-dew and vapours;
Here's enough bounding to make one stare,
But no real mounting up in the air.

Digitized by Google

INQUISITIVE TRAVELLER.

Surely all this parading
And mummery
Must be mere masquerading
And hummery?
Is there hope of persuading
One's eyes,
That yon form, arrayed in
The guise
Of the beautiful fairy
Oberon,
Is no Will-o'-the-wisp—no vagary—
No figment of fun?

ORTHODOX.

No claws? no tail to flink about?
Marvels will never cease.
Yet, that he's a Devil's past a doubt,
Even as the Gods of Greece.

NORTHERN ARTIST.

What I'm catching
Is merely sketching:
I prepare betimes, d'ye see,
For my tour in Italy.

PURIST.

What ill luck brings me to this scene of riot,
'Midst this witch-host unquiet,

Digitized by Google

That every moment louder get and louder?
And only two wear powder!

YOUNG WITCH.

Give shrivelled beldames, old and gray,
Powder, and a petticoat:
A buxom form (who dares gainsay?)
I, in my birth-day suit, display,
Sitting on my shagged he-goat.

MATRON.

Good manners, my dear,
Prevent squabbling here;
But, though fair and young,
May you rot ere long!

LEADER OF THE BAND.

Flies' probosces,
Moskitos' noses,
Don't swarm round the naked so!
Frog in the thicket,
Chirping cricket,
Keep good time, I pray you, though!

WEATHERCOCK

(*towards one side*).

Company, faith, to ones heart's content!
Young batchelors—brides—
And—nothing besides!
Admiring, hoping, is all their bent.

Digitized by Google

WEATHERCOCK

(*towards the other side*).

And if the ground doth not give token
That 'tis, instantly, going to open
And swallow them all of a lump,
I'll start off to hell in a jump.

XENIEN.

As insects, we present ourselves,
With sharp, grasping, mandibles,
As in duty bound to say, sa-sa,
To Satan, our most worshipful papa.

HENNINGS.

Do but see how naïvely the crowded troop
Are laughing and joking—all cock-a-hoop!
And I dare say they'll make out, at the conclusion,
That they had good hearts amidst all the confusion.

MUSAGET.

Well, really now, it gives me pleasure,
To lose myself 'mongst such folks as these are!
If a critic his own fate to choose is,
Give me witches to manage rather than muses.

CI-DEVANT GENIUS OF THE AGE.

'Mongst proper folks, one's able to assert
One's proper dignity. Take hold of my skirt!
The Blocksberg has an ample top, you see,
As the Parnassian hill of Germany.

Digitized by Google

INQUISITIVE TRAVELLER.

Pray, what's the name of that stiff man,
Who walks like a toucan?
He sniffs at every thing he can:
He's scenting out the Jesuit's clan.

THE CRANE.

I fish where streams are clear and blue;
I fish in troubled waters, too:
Like prudent saints, austere but civil,
Who, to serve their cause, would court the Devil.

WORLDLY ONE.

Your pious people, full of faith divine,
And grace's unction,
Deem fitting any place, and any time,
To exercise their function:
Why, even on the Blocksberg, strange to tell,
They've many a conventicle.

DANCER.

Hark! hitherward a new choir comes:
Hark! I hear the distant drums.
No! I'm in error—pray resume
The dance again—
'Tis the monotonous bittern's boom,
In yonder fen.

DANCING-MASTER.

The crooked leap, the clumsy hop:

Digitized by Google

How busy their bones all be!
Each skips on as he can, without stay or stop!
For, what show he makes, what cares he?

FIDDLER.

How cordial one's hate for ragamuffins!
And one cheerfully gives up the few.
The bagpipe is charming brutes with its puffings,
As the Orphean lyre used to do.

DOGMATIST.

Nor critics, nor doubts, of any kind,
Shall change my opinions, shall alter my mind.
The Devil must be something, though, after all,
Else how could there be any Devil at all?

IDEALIST.

Phantasy, for once thou art
Too o'erpowering for my sense:
Thou makest me start!
Prithee now, on what pretence,
If I myself am truly *all*,
Dost thou hold my sense in thrall?

REALIST.

This entity doth vex me sore;
'Tis a most consummate bore.
Whether I stand firm or no,
For the first time, I don't know.

Digitized by Google

SUPERNATURALIST.

How pleased am I at being here!
'T is quite delightful, I declare;
Because, *sans* doubt, one can infer,
From evil spirits, what good ones are.

SCEPTIC.

On the track of the flame, spurred by hopes of plunder,
They set off, thinking the treasure is under.
Here I'm at home. What from this d'ye infer, man?
Doubt rhymes to Devil only—in German.

LEADER OF THE BAND.

Frog in the thicket,
Chirping cricket,
Confounded dilettanti!
Gnats' probosces,
Moskitos' noses,
Fine musicians, an't ye?

THE SHARP ONES.

What shall the name of this merry host be?
Suppose we christen it *sans-souci*.
To walk on one's feet is no longer the go,
So we walk on our heads, you must know.

THE AWKWARD ONES.

In the good old times gone by, we
Got at many a tit-bit slyly;
But our shoes are all danced through in holes,

Digitized by Google

And we limp along on our bare soles.
Old times, farewell, a long farewell: good bye t'ye!

WILL-O'-THE-WISPS.

From the bog we come,
Whence we're newly sprung;
But here in the dance we figure away,
Making at once a grand display.

STAR-SHOOT.

In a bright etherial light
I darted from on high,
And now, alas! amidst the grass,
Crooked-wise, I lie,
Writhing, struggling, on this plain.
Who will help me up again?

THE MASSIVE ONES.

Make room, make room around!
Down go the grass-stalks flat!
Spirits pass over the ground—
True spirits—and yet, for all that,
They've stout limbs, heavy and fat.

PUCK.

Don't tread so heavily, pray,
Like elephants' cubs,
You unlicked chubs;
Let Puck himself, today,
Be the most substantial of this array.

Digitized by Google

ARIEL.

If kind nature hath given—
If from the spirit
You inherit
Wings to bear
Through the subtle air,
(Our domain, 'twixt earth and heaven),
Follow my bright track, ere it closes,
Up to the hill of roses.

ORCHESTRA (*pianissimo*).

Wreathing mists, and drifting clouds,
Withdraw your vapoury shrouds.
Mount, brighten, blend on high
In the clearing sky!
Lo, the breeze the hill-side brushes,
Sweeping o'er the grass and rushes;
And, like a dream,
The dissolving scene
Is, as though it had not been.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

A GLOOMY DAY.

A Plain.

FAUST, MEPHISTOPHELES.

FAUST.

In misery—utter misery! despairing!
Long since a wretched vagrant upon earth!
And now imprisoned! The kind unhappy creature!
Plunged, as a criminal, into a dungeon,
And manacled to suffer horrid tortures!
Come to such pass! Vile treacherous spirit!
And this, all this, thou hast concealed from me!—
Only confront me: only dare to face me!
Roll thy malicious eyes in devilish wrath!
Stand forth and brave me with thy hated presence!—
A prisoner! in hopeless misery!
Given over, as a prey to evil spirits,
And the pitiless judgements of humanity!——
And lulling me, the while, with tasteless nonsense;
Keeping from me her growing misery—
Leaving her, destitute of help, to perish!

Digitized by Google

MEPHISTOPHELES.

She's not the first.

FAUST.

Dog! vile, horrible monster!
Turn him, Thou Infinite Spirit! turn the wretch,
Turn him back again into that dog-like shape,
In which he oft has chose to trot beyond me;
To roll before some harmless wanderer's feet,
And fasten on his shoulders when he falls;—
Turn him once more into his darling shape,
That he may crouch before me in the sand,
Whilst I spurn him with my foot—the reprobate!
Not the first!—Oh, misery! Oh, misery!
Utterly inconceivable it is,
By any human soul, that more than one,
More than one wretched being, can have sunk
In such a depth of misery! that the first
In the writhing torture—the death agony—
Hath not been deemed sufficient to atone
For the guilt of every other, in the sight
Of the Ever-Pardoning! The misery of this one
Pierces me to the quick; whilst thou art grinning,
Calmly and coldly, at the fate of thousands!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Now are we once more at our wit's end, quite!
Just where the sense of you poor mortals snaps

Digitized by Google

With overstraining. Why enter on fellowship
With us, if thou canst not go quite through with it?
Wouldst fly, and yet dreadst the effects of dizziness?
Did we force ourselves on thee, or thou on us?

FAUST.

Gnash not thy greedy teeth at me, defyingly!
I loathe thee!——Thou great, Thou glorious Spirit,
Who deignedst to appear to me, who know'st my heart,
Why yoke me to this soul-degrading wretch,
Who feeds on wrong, and lives upon destruction?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Hast done?

FAUST.

Save her, I say, or woe be to thee!
The most horrible curse on thee, for countless years!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

I cannot loosen the avenger's shackles,
Nor have I power to withdraw his bolts.—Save her!
Who plunged her into ruin? I or thou?

[*Faust looks wildly round.*

Art grasping at the thunder? Aye, 'tis well
That it is not given to you wretched mortals!
To dash to pieces one who approaches you
In all the confidence of innocence;—
That's just the way a tyrant vents himself,
When he's in difficulties!

Digitized by Google

FAUST.

Convey me thither!
She must—she shall be free!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

But then, the danger
To which you thus expose yourself! For know,
Blood-guiltiness, by your hand, still lies on the town.
Avenging spirits hover o'er the place
Of the slain, and watch for the returning murderer?

FAUST.

That, too, from thee? the murder and death of a world
On thee, monster! Conduct me hence, I say,
And set her free!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

I will conduct thee, and what I can—list to!
Have I all power in heaven and on earth?—
I will cloud the gaoler's senses, and do you
Possess yourself of the keys, and set her free
After the human fashion. I will watch!
The magic horses will be there, all ready:
I'll bear you off. Thus much is in my power.

FAUST.

Up, and away!

Digitized by Google

NIGHT.

Open heath. FAUST, MEPHISTOPHELES, *rushing along on black horses.*

FAUST.

WHAT are they about—those, round the Ravenstone, yonder?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Can't tell what they're cooking and contriving.

FAUST.

Floating hither, thither, waving, stooping.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

A tribe of witches.

FAUST.

Strewing, sacrificing.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

On! on!

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

DUNGEON.

FAUST.

(*With a bunch of keys, and a lamp, before a small iron door.*)

TREMORS I've long been stranger to now seize me:
The entire misery of human nature
Fastens upon me. Here, behind these damp walls,
Is her abode: her only crime, poor child,
A virtuous illusion! Thou dread'st to approach her!
Thou fearest to behold her once again!
On! thy want of resolution hastens death.
[*He takes hold of the lock.*

[*Singing, within.*]

The mother who bore,
She killed me, the whore!
My father, the beast,
He did on me feast!
My little sister, she
Hid the bones under a shady tree.
Changed to a beautiful wood-bird am I:
Fly away! fly away! fly!

Digitized by Google

FAUST (*opening the lock*).

She has no foreboding that her lover listens,
And hears the clanking chains, and rustling straw!

[*He enters.*

MARGARET (*hiding her face in the straw bed*).

Woe! woe! they're coming for me! Bitter death!

FAUST (*softly*).

Hush! hush! I come to free thee!

MARGARET (*throwing herself before him*).

If thou'rt a man,
Feel for my distress.

FAUST.

Your screams will wake the guard.

[*He takes hold of the chains to unlock them.*]

MARGARET (*on her knees*).

Oh, executioner! who's given you power
To come and take me, when 'tis only midnight?
Be merciful! Oh, spare me! let me live!
Is not the dawn of morning time enough?

[*She stands up.*

I'm yet so young—so young! and must die already!
I was fair, too, and that was my destruction.
My love was by—now he's afar.
All torn the garland lies, the flowers all scattered.—
Don't handle me so roughly! spare me! spare me!
Let me not plead in vain! have mercy on me!

Digitized by Google

What harm have I done you? I never saw you—
Never in all my life before, you know.

FAUST.

Shall I outlive this misery?

MARGARET.

I know I'm wholly in your power now.
But let me first give suck to my poor baby.
All this whole night I pressed it to my heart.
They took it from me purposely to vex me,
And now they say I killed it.
I shall never be happy any more.
They sing songs about me:
'Tis very wicked of the folks to do so.
Why should an old tale be applied to me?

FAUST (*throws himself down*).

Thy lover lies at thy feet,
To unloose the bonds of misery.

MARGARET

(*throws herself beside him*).

Aye, let us kneel:
Let's invoke the Saints!
Under those steps, hell is boiling!
Aneath the floor, the Evil One,
With fearful anger, roars!

FAUST (*exclaiming*).

Gretchen! Gretchen!

Digitized by Google

MARGARET (*listening*).

That was the voice of my love!

[*She springs up: the chains fall off.*

Where is he? I heard him call.

I'm free! none shall prevent.

I'll fly to him—lie on his bosom!

He called Gretchen! he stood on the threshold.

Through the howling and clattering of hell—

Through the grim sneers, and fiendish scoffs—

I distinguished the voice of my love.

FAUST.

Yes, 'tis I!

MARGARET.

'Tis thou! say so again! [*Clasping him.*

'Tis he! 'tis he! Where's my misery gone?

Where's the dungeon's agony? where the chains?

'Tis thou, come to save me! I'm saved!——

There the street, where I saw you first, appears;

There, the cheerful garden, where I and Martha

Waited your coming first.

FAUST (*striving to take her away*).

Come with me! come along

MARGARET.

Oh stay, pray stay!

I love to be wherever thou art present.

[*Caressing him.*

Digitized by Google

FAUST.

Haste, haste! oh, if you don't make haste,
We shall pay for't dearly!

MARGARET.

What! won't you kiss me?
So short a time away from me, my love,
And you've forgotten how to kiss already?
What makes me feel so sad,
Though I'm clinging round your neck?
In bygone days,
Your words, your looks,
Spread a perfect heaven round me;
Then you kissed as if you'd smother me.
Kiss me! else I'll kiss you!

[*She embraces him.*

Woe, woe! your lips are cold—
Are dumb.
Who has robbed me?
Where have you left your love?

[*She turns away from him.*

FAUST.

Come! follow me! take courage, dearest love!
I'll press thee to my heart with tenfold warmth;
Only but follow me! I ask but this!

MARGARET (*turning to him*).

And is it thou? and is it thou, indeed?

Digitized by Google

FAUST.

It is I.—Come along.

MARGARET.

You loose the fetters:
You take me to your bosom once again.
How comes it that you're not afraid of me?—
And do you know, indeed, love, whom you're freeing.

FAUST.

Come, come! the depth of night's already passing.

MARGARET.

I've killed my mother,
I've drowned my child.
'Twas given—was't not?—to both.
To thee, too.——'Tis thou! I can scarce believe it.
Give me thy hand—'tis no dream!
Give me thy own dear hand.
Ah, how damp 'tis! Do wipe it off:
It seems to me that there's blood on't.
For God's sake, what hast thou done?
Put it up—put up thy sword!

FAUST.

Let bygones be bygones: thou distract'st me.

MARGARET.

No, you must stay behind.
I'll describe the graves to you:
You must see about them the first thing tomorrow.

Digitized by Google

Give the best place to my mother;
Place my brother close beside her;
And me—a little distance off;
But not too far, I entreat you!
And the baby—
That must lie on my right breast:
There's none beside that will!
To nestle to thy side—
That were indeed a sweet, a precious joy!
But nothing will go well with me again.
I feel as if drawn to your arms by force,
And that you were thrusting me from you;
And yet it is yourself,
Looking so kind, so gentle.

FAUST.

If you feel 'tis I, then come!

MARGARET.

What, out there?

FAUST.

Into the free pure air.

MARGARET.

If the grave's without,
If Death lies there in wait, then come along!
From hence to the eternal resting-place,
And not a step beyond. Thou'rt going now?
Oh, Henry, if I could but go forth too!

Digitized by Google

FAUST.

Thou canst! only consent! the door is open.

MARGARET.

I dare not go: there's no hope for me there.
What use is flying? they lie in wait for me.
'Tis so miserable to be forced to beg,
And what is worse, too, with a guilty conscience!
'Tis so miserable to wander in a strange place;
Besides, they will catch me, do as I will.

FAUST.

I'll stay with thee.

MARGARET.

Away!
Quick! quick! save thy poor child!
Keep the path by the brook,
Over the bridge,
In the midst of the wood—
On the left where the plank is—
In the pond.
Catch hold of it!
It strives to rise!
It struggles yet!
Help! help!

FAUST.

Oh, pray compose yourself! only one step, and you're free!

Digitized by Google

MARGARET.

Ah! if we were but only past the hill!
There is my mother, sitting on a stone,—
My brain grows cold!—there my poor mother sits
On the stone: she's waving to and fro her head;
She gives no sign, no nod; her head is heavy.
How long she sleeps; she'll never wake again.
She slept so, that we might enjoy ourselves.
Ah, those were pleasant days!

FAUST.

As no prayer, no persuasion, will avail,
I'll risk the bearing thee away by force.

MARGARET.

Let me alone! no, I'll endure no violence!
Do not lay hold of me so murderously!
I once, you know, did all to pleasure you.

FAUST.

The day is dawning! my love! my dearest love!

MARGARET.

Day! yes, 'tis near at hand! the last day's near!
It was to have been my wedding-day! Tell none
That thou with Gretchen hast already been.
Woe to my garland! 'tis all over now!
We shall meet again, but it won't be at the dance.
The crowd increases, though it is not heard:
The square, the streets, cannot contain them all.

Digitized by Google

The bell tolls, the staff breaks; they seize, they bind me.
Already to the blood-seat I am hurried;—
Already, quivering for every neck
The sharp steel that is quivering for mine.
The world lies dumb and quiet as the grave!

FAUST.

Oh, that I'd ne'er been born!

MEPHISTOPHELES (*appears within*).

Up! or you're lost.
Profitless hesitation! lingering, prattling!
My horses shudder: day begins to dawn.

MARGARET.

What's rising up from the bottom?—He! he!
Send him away! What, at the holy place,
Wants he? he is wanting me!

FAUST.

Thou shalt live!

MARGARET.

Judgement of God!
I have given myself up to thee!

MEPHISTOPHELES (*to Faust*).

Come! come! or I'll leave you in the lurch with her.

MARGARET.

FATHER! I'm thine. Oh, save me!
Ye holy hosts, range yourselves round to guard me!
Henry! I'm horror-struck for thee.

Digitized by Google

MEPHISTOPHELES.

She's judged!

VOICE FROM ABOVE.

Is saved!

MEPHISTOPHELES (*to Faust*).

Hither to me!

[*Disappears with Faust.*

VOICE (*from within, dying away*).

Henry! Henry!

END OF THE FIRST PART.

Digitized by Google

LONDON:
PRINTED BY ARTHUR TAYLOR,
COLEMAN STREET.

Digitized by Google

FAUST,

A TRAGEDY, IN TWO PARTS.

BY

GÖTHE.

RENDERED INTO ENGLISH VERSE.

VOL. II.

LONDON:
PRINTED BY ARTHUR TAYLOR,
COLEMAN STREET.

1838.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

THE TRAGEDY:

PART II.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

THE TRAGEDY:

PART II.

IN FIVE ACTS.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

ACT I.

A BEAUTIFUL LANDSCAPE.

Twilight.—A Spirit Circle: Beautiful tiny forms are floating round.

FAUST, *reclining on the flowery sward, weary, restless, endeavouring to sleep.*

ARIEL.

[*Song, accompanied by air-harps.*]

Now, o'er earth's awakening flowers,
Gently sink the vernal showers;
Midst reviving nature's glee,
Now 'tis bliss enough to be.
Tiny sylphides, hasten here
With your mighty spells, to cheer
This worn man: assuage his pain,
Be he holy or profane.
Airy circles, round him sweep;
All your elfin skill display,
The dread struggle, stern and deep,

Digitized by Google

That rends him, to allay;
Draw remorse's burning dart,
Cleanse his breast from memory's smart,
Bathe him in Lethean dews;
Vigour through his frame diffuse.
Four the nightly pauses are:
Gird him round with friendly care.
Flit round his form, on earth's green lap reclining,
Pillowing his head, his limbs to rest consigning.
Fairies, trip your deftest measure;
Sylphs, perform each loveliest rite;
With his pristine sense of pleasure,
Yield him to the hallowed light.

CHORUS.

[*Singly, to two and to many, dispersing and assembling.*]

Twilight, sinking o'er the scene,
Leads the health-renewing hours;
The soft air weaves its pearly screen
Round the leaves and folding flowers.
Gentle peace, in soothing whispers,
To couched mortals breathes repose,
Chaunting in the ear her vespers,
As the gates of daylight close.

Night the pomp of earth conceals,
Shrouding valley, lake, and mountain;

Digitized by Google

And sublimer pomp unveils,
Starry hosts beyond our counting,
Twinkling far and glistening near;
There, in clustering brightness sprinkled,
Mirrored in the broad lake here,
Far adown its depths unwrinkled.

Earth's in deepest stillness hushed:
Rides the moon in full-orbed glory;
All, o'er which her light hath gushed,
Gleams in silver radiance hoary:
All the breadths of mountain fell,
Where the fern and harebell springeth;
Every mist-ycradled dell,
Where the brook its lone chant singeth;
Every forest's leafy cope,
Thorough which the night air's sighing;
Every glade, as green as hope,
Midst their circling shadows lying.

All the headlong passions curbing,
Now the consecrated hours—
Joy and pain alike absorbing—
Renovate the human powers.
Mortal! their bland influence own;
Buoyant health again they bring thee;

Digitized by Google

When the day-god mounts his throne,
Hope's sweet song again they'll sing thee.

Midst the vales and swelling hills,
Future harvests greenly springing,
Budding thickets, murmuring rills,
Gladsome birds their matins singing:
Wish succeeding wish to grasp,
Up, and hail the coming glory!
With its earliest beams, unclasp
Sleep's dull mantle, now flung o'er thee!
Up, and dare life's venturous game!
Whilst the feeble crowd's delaying,
Genius spies the path to fame,
And lets doubts nor fears dismay him.

[*A tremendous noise announces the approach of the sun.*]

ARIEL.

List! list! list! that sound immense,
Obvious but to spirits' sense.
Even now, the day is born,
Midst the deepening roll of thunder;
And the adamantine gates are torn,
With crashing power, asunder;
As, 'midst gongs and clarions sounding,
From the east the light is bounding!
Bursting on the eye and ear

Digitized by Google

With astonishment and fear.
Quick, quick, in the flower-cups hide,
Under leaves, through rock-chinks, slide:
Deeper, deeper, deeper glide,
None the awful shock may bide.

FAUST.

How fresh and vigorous life's pulses beat,
The ethereal twilight's soft approach to greet;
Thou, too, my mother earth, this night wast true;
And even now, as, midst the fragrant dew,
On thy green flowery lap my form is laid,
What time the night withdraws her veil of shade,
Thy countless beauties burst upon my gaze
With all the freshness of my early days.
Humanity, thou sway'st, and dost enthral,
Yet thine's a lovely prison, after all:
How sweetly the first glowing tinge of day
Kisses thy languishing cheek! from every spray
Fresh budding in the forest, every mound
With heather, gorse, and graceful fern-tufts crowned,
The melody of birds, the wild bee's hum,
All the glad sounds of myriad life, now come,
In blending harmony, to greet mine ear;
The fog-streaks, that amidst the vales appear,
Reflect morn's lustre; aye, o'er each abyss,
Each mountain summit, crag, and precipice,

Digitized by Google

The clear effulgence of the heavens is.
What various tints are spread o'er hill and vale!
The blithesome lark springs up, the day to hail;
Light waves the gossamer in the balmy gale;
On every blade, on every flower-cup's rim,
The glistening dew-drops tremble; sun-motes swim
In pulsing eddies, round me; Paradise
Appears to open on my feasting eyes.

Yon mountain-top—fit altar whence the sun,
With hallowed rites, might first be worshipped from—
Kindles its lofty beacon, to declare
The awfully festive hour, for those who dare,
At early morn, the eternal lights of heaven
To gaze on and adore; to whom is given
The fire of genius, burning inwardly
To commune with the spirits of the sky.
Now the upland meadows brighten in the sun,
And mantles of spring's tenderest green put on;
And now, descending gradual to the plains,
In full-robed splendour, day's bright monarch reigns
Supreme o'er all below! his dazzling gaze,
Perforce, I turn from, blinded by the blaze.

'Tis even thus with our most keen desires:
With eager haste, we seek fulfilment's port,
And then, 'midst all to which the soul aspires,
We pause, of wild astonishment the sport,

Digitized by Google

And strive to quench the o'erpowering flame we kindled;
A sea, amidst whose flashing waves are mingled
Myriads of fiery longings, girds us round.
Is love, is revenge, the gleam towards which we bound?
Is fame, or wealth, or power? It matters not:
Aguish anxiety, now chill, now hot,
Alternate joy and pain, is still our mortal lot;
Till, even amidst the glowing charms of spring,
We wish o'er earth again the veil of night to fling.
Now from the bright sun for awhile I turn;
But, with renewing extacy, I burn
O'er yonder ridge to see the torrent bound,
In foam and thunder, to the abyss profound;
From precipice to precipice it leaps,
And downward, by a thousand channels, sweeps,
Tossing on air full many a silvery wreath,
In its headlong course to the boiling gulf beneath.
How tranquilly yon variegated bow,
Athwart the uproar wild, its arch doth throw!
From constant change producing constant beauty,
And gilding the divided drops that spread
In cool diffusive showers, whose grateful duty
Is to green the leafy drapery round its bed.
There, mirrored, human efforts one may see—
Reflected tints form life's reality.

Digitized by Google

IMPERIAL PALACE.

The Throne Chamber.—Council of State awaiting the Emperor's approach.

TRUMPETS.

All the COURTIERS, *magnificently dressed, advance.*

The EMPEROR *ascends the Throne; on his right stands the Astrologer.*

EMPEROR.

WE greet our faithful lieges, here assembled
From near and distant portions of our realms.—
The sage is at his post: where stays the fool?

NOBLEMAN.

Sire, on the train of your imperial robe
Following close, of a sudden down he fell
O'er the steps, and was borne off—the greasy lump;
But whether dead or drunk no one can tell.

SECOND NOBLEMAN.

And then at once, with marvellous celerity,
Another fellow pushed into his place,
Magnificently dressed, but so ill-favoured
That he shocked us all; and the guard threw
His battle-axe across, and barred his entrance—
Yet there he stands, even now, the audacious fool!

Digitized by Google

MEPHISTOPHELES (*kneeling by the throne*).

What is't that's always curst, yet always welcome?
What is't that all make choice of, yet none own?
To what, when driven up, will mortals still come?
Whom darest thou not to cite before thy throne?
At the sound of what name is't that, by all, joy's shown?
What was't that stood before thy presence, pray?
What was it vanished, of itself, away?

EMPEROR.

Forgo these puzzling and untimely riddles:
My ministers take cognizance of such things.
Away with problems! let's have what's amusing.
My former fool is lost to me, I fear:
Take thou his post, and come here to my side.

MEPHISTOPHELES *ascends the steps, and places himself on the left of the throne.*

MURMURS OF THE ASSEMBLY.

A new fool—a fresh plague!—who is he—whence?—
The old one fell—he's thrown aside as useless—
Tripped over something—now there will be strife.—

EMPEROR.

Once again, faithful lieges, hail, and welcome!
'Neath a propitious star have ye assembled:
Joy and redemption is in store on high.
But how comes it to pass, at such a time,
When we throw off the cares of government,

Digitized by Google

And purple trappings of imperial pomp,
The masquerader's gay disguise to wear,
That we are pestered with affairs of state?
Yet, since 'tis deemed they cannot else proceed,
Our presence is vouchsafed—make quick dispatch.

CHANCELLOR.

The most exalted virtue, like a glory,
Surrounds the imperial head; but he delays
To exert his power, and give it energy.
Justice!—that all hearts yearn for and demand,
That is indispensable,—it lies with him
To enforce, for his subjects' sake. But what avail
High intellect, good heart, and bounteous hand,
When feverish tumult rages in the state,
And evils gather o'er it, like dark clouds?
On what a fearful vision doth he gaze
Who, from exalted station, overlooks
The on-goings of this wide-extended realm!
Where selfish, purblind, ill-conditioned beings
Jostle with others of a kindred nature;
Where lawless power o'er-rules what's just and lawful,
Unkennelling a host of baleful crimes.
The multitude is plundered by itself;
Virgins are ravished; even the sacred altar
Is robbed of cross, and candlestick, and chalice,
Time immemorial held in veneration;

Digitized by Google

Yet the culprits go unscathed. Before the judge,
Who sits in solemn state, with robe and cushion,
Through the throng pressing, the accuser stands;
Whilst the multitude is swaying to and fro,
Its wrath and tumult momently increasing.
A bold accomplice, glorying in his shame,
Standing forth, clears his fellow-rogue; and *Guilty!*
Only, resounds thorough the hall of justice
When the innocent are put on their defence.
For how can any one the mind unravel
That's restricted to the law's interpretation?
Besides, the best-intentioned yield at last,
If constantly besieged with bribes and flattery.
A judge who has it not in his power to punish,
At length takes part himself with the delinquent.
I paint a gloomy picture, but its tone
Is far less gloomy than the truth requires.— [*Pause.*
I could not hesitate to urge these truths,
When all are injuring, when all are suffering;
When majesty, itself, is being robbed.

COMMANDER OF THE FORCES.

What wild disorder reigns in these rude times!
All, in their turn, butchering or being butchered.
Deaf to your servants' call, the burgher stays
Within his walls, the knight in his rock-eyrie;
And there entrenched each swears to abide, and hold

Digitized by Google

Their rights and independence firmly fast.
The mercenaries, too, become impatient,
And clamour for arrears: were these paid up,
They'd harry each rebellious wasp's nest out;
They would protect the realm, that's now laid waste;
Whereas, licentious riot's daily spreading,
And half the world's already in confusion.
Yet have our troops the mastery out of doors,
Though no one thinks himself obliged to stir.

TREASURER.

Let nobody in such confederates trust!
Of what advantage, Sire, are your wide realms,
If men live independent and unmulcted?
The water from the aqueducts is turned,
Dwellings are raised where folks live as they please,
And we are forced to connive at all they do.
So many privileges have been yielded,
That shortly nothing will be left to grant.
Besides, there's now-a-days no comprehending
How different parties are to be distinguished:
Folks dare to praise or blame, to love or hate,
As suits their humour; Guelphs and Ghibellines,
Alike, desert their standard, and won't fight.
Who, now, will go forth to defend his neighbour?
Every one's busied with his own concerns;
Every one scrapes, and scratches, and collects;

Digitized by Google

Whilst the golden gates are closed, the Treasury empty.

MASTER OF THE HOUSEHOLD.

What difficulties I encounter, daily!
Daily economizing all I can,
Yet finding, daily, more and more consumption;
Daily embarrassed by some fresh annoyance.
Though, in the cellar, cask on cask is piled
Of the best soil and vintage, wine's deficient,
Through the endless drinking bouts of the nobility;
And for town-councilmen liquor must be drawn,
Which they gulp down, in bowls and cups, by wholesale,
Till they fall beneath the table whilst carousing.
Then, though wild boars, and fallow deer, and roes,
Hares, partridges, and poultry, ducks and geese,
As feus and contributions, come in tolerably,
So that the cooks are kept in full employment,
Resources, every year, are so anticipated,
That the future harvest is forestalled for bread;
The swine get killed before they are half fat;
The very feathers of the beds are mortgaged;
Nay, I live myself in daily, hourly, dread
Of falling into the clutches of the Jews.

THE EMPEROR,

(*after some consideration, to Mephistopheles.*)

Speak, Fool! hast thou no troubles to recount,
Like all the rest?

Digitized by Google

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Your Highness, none whatever.
What a splendid scene is this to look around on!
And how can heart or confidence be wanting,
When the monarch hath at his supreme disposal
Such lieges and resources? promptly extinguished
Rebellion needs must be, by such brave hands;
Where such stars shine, where strength is nerved by zeal,
And led by intellect, how can dark mischief gather?

MURMURS.

He is a rogue—that is as clear as daylight.—
What lies he tells—what a thumper, to be sure—
That's all old fudge.—What are we to hear next?—
What's the next proposition?—Oh, a project——

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Is there a realm on earth where nothing's wanting?
The failure here is, being short of cash,
Which, certes, from the surface can't be gleaned,
But wisdom, from the depths of its resources,
May aid you to procure it. In hidden veins,
Within earth's caverned depths, the miner finds it;
And ask ye my advice, how to obtain it?
Employ your natural and mental powers.

CHANCELLOR.

Natural, and mental! Speak not thus to Christians.
Atheists are burnt for exercising these,

Digitized by Google

And making dangerous speeches of this sort.
Nature is sinful, Mind is from the Devil,
And 'twixt the two that monster Doubt's begotten,
A miscreated vile hermaphrodite.
Not so we! the Emperor's ancient fiefs
Can boast two privileged and high born classes,
The glory and the safeguards of the throne:
The sacred priesthood, and the knightly orders.
'Tis theirs to quell all popular storms, and divide,
As their reward, the church and state betwixt them.
To unfold the vulgar mind breeds opposition,
And heresy and sorcery, whereby
City and country are alike polluted.
Darest thou propose, in this august assembly,
To stir up and corrupt the common herd,
Who, certainly, to fools are cousin-germans?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

In this I recognize the nobles' wisdom!
What your noses touch not, is at endless distance;
What does not stare you in the face, is visionary;
What ye do not reckon on, ye deem untrue;
What ye cannot weigh, of course, can have no weight;
What ye have not coined, pray how can that pass current?

EMPEROR.

But this Lent-sermon won't relieve our wants.
I'm sick of the eternal ifs and hows:

Digitized by Google

Gold we're in need of—well and good—procure it.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

I'll realize your wish by what will be
Seemingly light, but weighty in effect.
Wealth lies beneath, even now—but to attain it?
Aye, that's the mystery! Think of all the panics,
When barbarous hordes swept onward, like a flood,
Over the land and its inhabitants,
Who, flying with their families, concealed,
As best they could, their treasures in the ground.
So was it in the mightier days of Rome;
So hath it been from thence to the present hour.
The whole lies buried underneath the soil;
And that the emperor claims lordship o'er.

TREASURER.

For a fool, his counsel's not at all amiss:
Certes, it *is* our mighty sovereign's right.

CHANCELLOR.

The snares the Devil spreads have golden meshes:
He never gives us what is really good.

MASTER OF THE HOUSEHOLD.

If he gives us a fair chance of welcome treasure,
I'd overlook a little bit of wrong for't.

COMMANDER OF THE FORCES.

The fool is right: he promises what all
Can turn to good account; and whence, or how

Digitized by Google

It is obtained, is not a soldier's question.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Ye err, perchance, by putting trust in me;
There stands your man! consult the astrologer:
Circle enclosed in circle he can draw,
And show the house, the planetary hour,
The heavens' aspect. Say, is it propitious?

MURMURS.

Rogues both—they are already in collusion—
Conjuror and fool—one on each side the throne—
Chanting in chorus, or alternate parts,
The same old ditty.—Hey for fools and visionaries!—

ASTROLOGER

(*speaks; Mephistopheles recites after him*).

The sun himself is formed of purest gold;
Wing-footed Mercury serves for pay and favour;
Venus hath ministered to all in turn,
And, at some time or other, swayed ye all
By the potent magic of resistless beauty;
The chaste Diana's moody and capricious;
The threatening power of Mars must be avoided;
Jupiter shines forth with enduring lustre;
Saturn, though to the eye so small and distant,
Is a mighty orb; but not in much repute
Is his metal held: 'tis of small worth, though weighty.
Yea! when the Sun with Luna doth associate,

Digitized by Google

Silver with gold, then doth the world rejoice;
Palaces, castles, gardens, rosy health,
All, the profoundly learned sage procures.

EMPEROR.

Twice, and distinctly, is the speech delivered,
But not a jot the wiser for't am I.

MURMURS.

What good is this to us—old, worn-out stuff—
Trash from old almanacks—alchemic lore—
The one is just as false and bad as the other—
Both preach the self-same humbug and buffoonery.—

MEPHISTOPHELES.

There stand the astonished crowd, and gape and stare,
Doubting the grand discovery we proclaim—
The one by mandrakes, one by the black hound.
Why should one be accused of sorcery, one of jesting,
When the sole aim of this is to gratify,
Of the other, to find out a fitting road?
Ye must all be sensible that, with mighty Nature,
Profoundest mystery is the eternal rule;
From her central depths, through all her devious tracks,
Up to the life-enjoying surface round you,
Know ye how aught's produced, how aught's unfolded?
When ye find a spot where ye're restless and uneasy,
Where ye feel cramps and pinches in your limbs,
At once resolve to sink, and drive, and explore it.

Digitized by Google

There is the showman; there the treasure lies.

MURMURS.

My feet both feel as if they were wrapped in lead—
I've cramp in my arm—the gout has seized my toe—
How my back's aching!—From such signs as these,
This would appear to be the richest spot.

EMPEROR.

But quick! and don't be slipping off again;
Put to the test this magic froth of yours!
Forthwith unfold to us these splendid stores;
And I—my sword and sceptre laid aside—
With my own regal hands—if thou dost not lie—
Will obtain it; if thou dost—to hell thou'lt be sent.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

One might be able, perhaps, to trace one's way there.
But, what I first asserted, let me urge:
That, every where, the choicest treasures lie
Unclaimed and masterless. The peasant ploughs
The soil, and turns up, as he turns the furrow,
Some vessel filled with coins amongst its clods;
He tears a wall down, and, amidst the rubbish,
He grasps with trembling joy rouleaus of gold.
What vaults and galleries filled with conscious treasure
Must lie next the nether world, unrifled, unexplored!
In treasure chambers, firm as earth's foundations,
What heaps of massive plate! what noble goblets

Digitized by Google

Scooped qut of rubies, and all precious gems!
What store of ancient nectar, in vaults, strong
As earth's foundations! held in casks whose staves,
Though still surrounding it, have long decayed,
And only guarded by its crust of tartar.
For not, alone, are gold and jewels hid
In the earth's caverned depths, 'midst gloom and horror;
But the rare essences of choicest wines.
Philosophers are indefatigable
Here, 'midst the light of day, in exploring things;
But darkness is the home of mystery.

EMPEROR.

I leave all that to thee. What use is darkness?
A thing, to be worth aught, must be brought to light.
Who could tell a rogue from an honest man,
In the dark; in the dark all cats are gray.
But let the plough be set to work forthwith,
To turn those pots of gold up from below.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

What! demean thyself, to let the o'er-tasked peasant,
With plough and hoe, by his labour, make thee great,
When a herd of golden calves may start from the ground
Of their own accord, for thy use? and when,
By spells, thou mayst thy enraptured mistresses
Adorn with precious gems of every hue,
Increasing both their gratitude and beauty!

Digitized by Google

EMPEROR.

But be quick, I say! be quick: how long will it take?

ASTROLOGER.

Sire, may't please you, rein these o'er keen desires!
The revelling must first close, for dissipation
Will never guide us unto what we seek.
We must collect ourselves, and pray for favour
And aid from above, to obtain what's underneath.
Who seeks success, must show that he deserves it;
Who wooes delight, must tranquillize his blood;
Who longs for wine, must crush the ripe grape first;
Who hopes for miracles, must put faith in creeds.

EMPEROR.

Well, in the interval get all in train!
So shall Ash-Wednesday be sincerely welcome.
Meanwhile, at all events, we'll celebrate
The merry carnival in fitting style.

[*Flourish of trumpets. Exeunt.*

MEPHISTOPHELES.

How luck and merit hang together!
But to fools this chances never.
Had the sage their stone—what profit?
They'd want a sage to make use of it.

Digitized by Google

A VAST HALL,

With Side Chambers round, for the Masquers to change their dresses.

HERALD.

Don't suppose you're within the German rules,
Amongst death-dances, devils and fools:
A pleasanter feast is designed.
By his Roman marches, the Lord hath climbed,
For your amusement, and his renown,
Over the mighty Alps, to find
A serener kingdom of his own.
By rights divine and hereditary
Our emperor claims the territory.
When he seized the crown—and long may he reign!
Some caps for us, also, he did obtain.
Friends, a new birth is ours:
An active spirit of sympathy
Makes us discern all things that be;
Alone, in couples, throng after throng,
(Which, to our purified vision, seem
Phantoms enacting a crazy dream),
Play their myriad pranks, and then pass on,
Through the world's wide porch, to oblivion.

Digitized by Google

FLOWER-GIRLS.

[*Song, accompanied by mandolins.*]

Hoping your applause tonight,
We, in blooming garlands dight,
German flower-girls young and gay,
Flora's darlings here display.

Many a fragrant gem we wear
Braided with our auburn hair,
Blended with those silky braids
Whose loveliness their beauty aids.

And the art we dearest prize
Is, their buds in richer dyes
And fresher fragrance still, to nourish,
And, throughout the year, make flourish.

Graceful forms and lovely hues,
With instinctive taste, we choose,
Blending stem with stem, till breathes
Subtlest beauty through the wreaths.

Graceful manners, too, have we,
Simple flower-girls though we be;
For, in art's deep school, the fair
All, by nature, students are.

Digitized by Google

HERALD.

Set your flowery stores down, pray,
That such fragrance round diffuse;
Let all see the choice display,
And their own pet beauties choose.

Lo, a garden! planned in haste,
With its foliage, walks, and beds,
By nymphs, each with skill and taste
Worthy of the stores she spreads.

FLOWER-GIRLS.

What we bring to this clear space,
Without haggling to be sold,
Will, in brief peculiar phrase,
Forthwith unto all be told.

OLIVE-BRANCH WITH FRUIT.

I envy not the blossoming prime,
No contentious strife is mine;
Against my very nature this is:
Still a land-mark, still am I
The sure pledge of peace and joy
To many a plain the bright sun kisses.
But my crowning hope is, now,
To encircle beauty's brow.

Digitized by Google

CROWN OF GILDED WHEAT-EARS.

Ceres' gifts see gold enshrining
For the service of the fair;
Their enduring charms both twining,
Garland meet for beauty's hair.

FANCY WREATH.

Fancy flowers, like Altheas,
Wreathed with moss, your tastes to please:
Nature's growth you'll rarely see as
Singularly gay as these.

FANCY NOSEGAY.

To give name to all that's blent here,
Theophrastus would not venture.
Nor hope we to suit every taste;
But, if gracefully the fair
Will weave us in her flowing hair,
Or the virgin zone unbind,
Round her slender waist,
And next her heart we've place assigned,
We swear to please, so graced.

CHALLENGE.

For the fashion of the day,
Coloured fancies we display:
Curious wonders here behold!
Ne'er did nature such unfold.
On green shafts see bells of gold,

Digitized by Google

And profuse curls round them rolled!
Yet we——

ROSEBUDS.

Stay, for we are veiled:
Who first finds us, thus concealed,
Is in luck's way. 'Neath summer kisses,
Kindling rosebuds' charms unfold.
Is there one who fortune wishes?
Hope's fair type and pledge behold.
In fragrant rosebuds—Flora's pride—
Sense and soul and heart reside.

[*Amidst shrub-lined turfy walks, the flower-girls arrange, in an ornamental manner, their various stores.*

GARDENERS.

[*Song, accompanied by Theorbos.*]

See, to encircle your locks with beauty,
Here are flowers serenely fair.
Taste of those fruits: 'tis our pleasing duty
To imbue them with flavours rare.

Lo, here are the vine's delicious berries:
Try them, don't judge by the eye.
Here are imperial plums, and cherries;
Here peaches. Come buy! come buy!

Digitized by Google

Permit us, garlands of budding flowers
Round the temples of youth to wreathe;
And, for maturer years, be it ours
Full-blown tiaras to weave.

That the pansy and rose have the very spirit
Of beauty, at once you descry;
But of choice fruits to discern the merit,
You must taste them. Come buy! come buy!

With leafy labyrinths o'er them spreading,
All, who may so be inclined,
At our homes—the green turfy pathways treading—
Buds, leaves, flowers, fruits may find.

[*Amidst alternating songs, accompanied by guitars and theorbos, leading off both choirs, their commodities gradually adorn and spread round the open space, and are offered for sale.*

MOTHER *and* DAUGHTER.

MOTHER.

Child, when you first beheld the light,
And I drew round your cherub face
A little cap adorned with lace,
And dressed you in a robe of white,
You seemed, in my fond eyes, so fair,
That fancy showed you, to my pride,

Digitized by Google

Already, as a blooming bride,
And worthy of the richest heir.

Alas! since to your christening came
Our merry friends, full many a year
Hath flown; and yet you still, my dear,
Retain your maiden name,
Although, with one, you lead the dance,
And play at romping with another,
Familiarly as with a brother,
Exchanging many a kindly glance.

And then, what feasts we've given for nought,
Expensive, child, and useless, too;
Forfeits we've played—but 'twould not do,
The third man would not be so caught.
The fools still flutter round you, free,
Too fond of liberty and pelf.
Darling! I'd pay the fees myself,
Rather than still unmarried be.

PLAYFUL GIRLS, *young and beautiful, advance and mingle with the other groups; a confidential tattling gradually becomes loud.*

FISHERMAN *and* BIRD-CATCHER, *with nets, fish-hooks, limed twigs, and other implements, come forward, and*

Digitized by Google

mix with the beautiful children, shifting hither and thither to escape, as the children, singing, try to detain them; giving rise to a pleasing conversation.

WOOD-CUTTER

(*advancing in a rough uncouth manner*).

Make room! stand clear!
Space wanting here!
With swinging blow,
Huge trees we throw—
Crash, they come down:
By clear space round
The labour's crowned.
The branching stem
To lop and trim,
Or logs to split
The hearth to fit,
Or faggots to bind,
Who will you find
Able as we?
Also, know ye
That, without our sweat,
You'd frost-bitten get.

PUNCHINELLO (*clumsy, and almost silly*).

You're all a breed
Of fools, who succeed

Digitized by Google

Fools: the contrary
Are we, the wary,
With tasselled caps,
Jerkins, and flaps,
Light and airy;
Idle folks we,
Merry and free,
Nimble-footed,
By nature suited,
Eel-like, to pass
Thorough the mass,
Who, breathless flocking
To enjoy the joking,
Join, one and all, in
Clapping and bawling.
If folks abuse,
Or praise ensues,
We're put in no fuss:
'Tis the same to us.

PARASITE (*earnestly wheedling*).

Most noble peasant,
And you, most pleasant
Coal-heaver, all
Brethren I call,
And to all bow,
And nod, and vow;

Digitized by Google

Phrases gleaning
Of double meaning,
That, if warm or cold,
Can't be foretold,
Until one sees
What fate decrees.
Heaps of coal,
And faggots withal,
On the broad hearth stand,
But need not be fanned—
The glowing fire
From heaven they'll acquire.
The true lick-dish
Roast-meat and fish
Instinctively noses;
And this presupposes
A vast deal of zeal
For a patron's weal,
Whom fortune makes able
To spread such a table.

DRUNKARD (*unconscious*).

Nothing shall go cross, I swear:
Nought today shall tease me.
Jovial songs, and good strong beer!
Success to the free and easy!

Digitized by Google

Round to pass
The foaming glass,
Hither, hither, hither!
All good fellows gather.

Fie, little sweetheart smart and gay!
Don't turn up your nose so.
An't I as proud of my own display?
Faith, and I should suppose so.
Round to pass
The foaming glass,
Hither, hither, hither!
All good fellows gather.

Don't suppose I'm going astray:
I'm just where it suits me.
Score not with the landlord, pray,
If his wife or maid's on duty.
Round to pass
The cheerful glass,
Hither, hither, hither!
All good fellows gather.

May I, wandering where I please,
Find stronger beer and stronger;
And 'neath the bench still lie at ease,
When I can sit no longer.

Digitized by Google

Round to pass
The cheerful glass,
Hither, hither, hither!
All good fellows gather.

The HERALD *introduces several Poets; poets of nature, high bred and courtly bards, tender and enthusiastic ones. In the throng of competitors of every sort, no one can distinctly understand what is said. One slinks by with a few words.*

SATIRIST.

Know ye what the poet's art
First taught me to enjoy?
I in phrases terse and smart
Thus best the world annoy.

The Elegiac Bards excuse themselves, because just now engaged in an interesting conversation with some newly-risen Vampires, and on the very point, perhaps, whence a new subject for poetry may be developed: the Herald is compelled to admit the apology, and summon, in the mean time, the personages of the Greek mythology forth, that, even in more modern masks, lose neither character nor agreeableness.

Digitized by Google

The Graces.

AGLAIA.

We bid pleasure live;
Pleasure 'tis to give.

HEGEMONE.

And pleasure to acquire,
To grasp the soul's desire.

EUPHROSYNE.

And pleasure, in calm mood,
To pour forth gratitude.

The Fates.

ATROPUS.

I, the oldest spinner known,
Now with human skeins am fraught.
In life's slender thread is shown
Much profound and patient thought.

With nicest art my flax is dressed,
Hence its glossy pliant texture;
Exquisitely fine its twist,
From my skilful fingers flexure.

When the syren Luxury spreads
The feast, and throws her gates wide open,
Think of life's short fragile threads,
And how soon they may be broken.

Digitized by Google

CLOTHO.

Know, in this latter age, that to me,
Of the fatal shears is given the use,
For folks unfit to manage, may be,
Though, like our eldest, they produce.

I cut, and the useless web, unravelling,
Gets thrown by, 'midst dust and gloom;
And hope, that was erst with the weaver travailing,
Is but a carving on his tomb.

But young as my reign is, I have made
Some hundred errors, at the least;
So my shears, today, in their sheath are laid,
That I may not disturb the feast.

In sooth, this friendly scene I enjoy,
And to peace am willingly bound o'er;
Whilst, in security, you employ
The hours—revelling more and more.

LACHESIS.

The yarns are all arranged by me—
Sole wise one of the Destinies;
'Neath due control my reel you see,
However rapidly it flies.

Digitized by Google

At once the threads are wound, unwound,
Yet 'tangle not—for I preside;
And, as the wheel goes swiftly round,
I all their myriad courses guide.

Should I, a moment, leave my task,
Alarm throughout the world would spread;
Hours, summed by countless years, rush past,
Yet weavers get supplied with thread.

HERALD.

-However skilled in ancient mysteries,
The phantoms that next pass before your eyes
You will not comprehend. They seem so fair,
Though so much ill they accomplish, that they are
Welcomed by all; nor is there one who sees
The FURIES in such lovely belles as these;
Yet, let me tell you that it all behoves
To learn how serpent-like are these fair doves;
For surely in these days, when every ass
Exults in his faults and follies, they're not less
Malicious than of old, though they aspire
To rites divine no longer, nor look higher [fire.
Than to be mere household plagues, and fan domestic

ALECTO.

Playful as kittens, youthful and fair,
How should we fail weak man to catch?

Digitized by Google

Has he a sweetheart his soul holds dear?
We never fail his long ears to scratch;

We whisper of falsehood and rivalry;
With nods, and winks, and leerings aside;
We turn his head and his thoughts awry,
'Till utterly worthless becomes his bride.

Nor fail we, a jot less, to plague the wife:
For a few brief weeks his bosom friend,
Then in hate or contempt they settle for life—
Unless by a halter their troubles end.

MEGÆRA.

Forming such leagues is the merest jest:
I dissolve them. I have the power,
With whims, to embitter the very best
Fortune: man changes each changing hour.

And who that, tormented with strong desires,
But feels their emptiness when attained?
Finish in ashes, the brightest fires;
To frost, the most glowing sun leaves the plains.

Yet through them I cause man his race to renew;
Then, at my beck, Asmodeus repairs
To sprinkle their couch with unhallowed dew;
And thus I destroy the earth-gods, in pairs.

Digitized by Google

TISIPHONE.

Poison and poignard I mix and sharpen,
Instead of the slanderer's gall.
Shines love? then, ere long, the prospect will darken:
Betrayed, or betraying, you'll fall.

Ah! that love's sweet hours may not remain,
But to years of bitterness turn.
Ah! that business or riot are sought in vain,
Relief from such misery to earn.

"No hatred cherish: leave Heaven to avenge,"
Mercy cries to the caves and rocks;
"Who falters shall perish: revenge! revenge!"
Thus Echo, the pleader, mocks.

HERALD.

Beloved! may it please you, stand aside,
For more capricious beings onward glide.—
Friends, turn we where yon thronged mount rears its head,
With varigated carpet o'er it spread
By those proud fair ones; and that monster see,
With huge tusks and serpent snout, a mystery,
To unfold which I shall present a key.
A glorious female at his side doth stand,
And guides him, as she lists, with slender wand;

Digitized by Google

Her own majestic form encircled round
With holy radiance, such as doth confound
The senses by its overpowering glare.
And mark, too, side by side, yon high-born pair;
One with an anxious look, one full of glee;
This wishing, that being conscious she is free.
They will themselves explain t'ye what they are.

FEAR.

Feebly glimmer torch and taper
Through this intricate display.
From this juggling realm of vapour,
Ah! could I but flee away.

Hence, avaunt thee, idle laugher!
Grinning puts me in a fright.
I suspect thee, onward, after,
Round me, dangers throng tonight.

See that friend, my foe becoming;
See that mask—'tis clear as day
He'd murder me: I know the omen.
Ah! found out he slinks away.

Gladly would I fly from terrors,
To the unknown space beyond;
But remain in mist and horrors,
For *there* waves destruction's wand.

Digitized by Google

HOPE.

All hail, beloved sisters, all hail!
Shrouded in gloom, would ye wear away,
Like the past, the present and future, I pray,
Still letting your love of dim torch-light prevail?
I the bright morning unveil!
Merrily, merrily, day after day,
With me over sunshiny meadows stray;
None to thwart us, none to gainsay;
Social or silent, as whim may suggest;
Reposing or scheming,
Dancing or dreaming;
Making of life and its cares a jest;
Finding a welcome wherever we go.
This is the scheme of all schemes, I trow:
Of our being to make the best.

PRUDENCE.

Fear and Hope approach together!
Man's two greatest foes are they:
I avoid their contact ever.
Place ho! off each starts away.

Up the steps, yon tower is cresting,
See those active giants climb,
Step by step, untired, unresting,
Till they gain the heights sublime.

Digitized by Google

Mark yon winged goddess, soaring
O'er that high crest in the skies;
Hither, thither, round exploring,
Gathering every golden prize.

Lustrous glory circles round her;
True, and ever active, she;
Crowning all who do not founder,
And her name is Victory.

ZOILO-THERSITES.

Bah! bah! I have come straight away to declare
How contemptible, altogether, ye are;
I myself, on the outskirts, saw
One far above Mistress Victoria;
His steeds, with bright wings cleaving the air,
Such as an eagle would proudly wear.
If the vision will but haste this way,
Realm and people will yield to its sway.
But when once its success is made plain,
I'll buckle my armour on again.
To exalt the low and debase the great,
To level the mountain and raise the valley,
To make the straight crooked, the crooked straight,
Are things that best with my nature tally,—
Are what keep me in a wholesome state,
As round the earth's circle I range.

Digitized by Google

HERALD.

Thou ill-conditioned brute! shrink and change!—
As now this wand a master-stroke performs,
Lo, the twyform dwarf to a loathesome mass returns!
What miracle's this? behold, the shapeless heap
Blackens and bursts! and see, from out it, leap
The viper and the bat! a twin-born pair;
One crawls in the dust, one through the obscure air,
With darkness for a veil, pursues his way.
Abroad they sally: strict confederates, they.
I should announce a third such with dismay.

MURMURING.

Behind with the dancing! play up, I say.—
Faith, I wish I was out of the way.—
How they whisk round us, the phantom herd!—
My ears are ringing—my hair is stirred—
I can't keep my feet on this trembling ground—
No injury done—all safe and sound—
But yet all from fear are looking astound.—
The game is up with them—there's an end on't:
Just what the phantoms wished, depend on't.

HERALD.

As my heraldic duty is to call
The masqueraders to this merry hall,
And introduce them, I, with zealous care,
Watch at the porch, lest any, unaware,

Digitized by Google

Dangerous, unknown, or unannounced, should dare
To enter; nor irresolute am I.
Yet, through the casement airy sprites may fly:
I've no resource 'gainst magic, certainly.
Lo, hitherward, resistless as the storm,
A mighty power is rushing! and the form
Is his the sneering dwarf foretold, I warrant;
But quite unknown to me his name and errand,
And what's unknown I wish not to announce.
Advise, all, what I'd better do, at once!
See, 'midst yon dense crowd, rushing from afar,
Four winged coursers draw a splendid car,
Round which, like meteors, many a brilliant star
Is flashing—hither, thither, near and far.
With clear space round, right onward doth it glide;
Crowds gird it, seeming never to divide,
But like a magic lantern's scenes, unfold!—
Make way! give place! I shudder to behold.

A BOY (*as a charioteer*).

Steeds! your winged speed restrain,
Obedient to the accustomed rein.
Rule yourselves, as I ruled you,
What time, along the vapoury waste,
Inspired by me, you rushing passed.
Here, we purpose honour due.

Digitized by Google

Circle upon circle, gazing
On the glory o'er them blazing,
Thicken round us. Herald, go,
And our style and titles show,
In phrases metaphorical—
For we are allegorical.
Introduce, and make us known,
Speedily—or we are gone.

HERALD.

I know not your names, but I
Can describe ye.

THE YOUNG CHARIOTEER.

Prithee, try.

HERALD.

I confess, then, that ye are
Young and beautiful and fair.
Ye're a half-grown youngster, though
The women scarce may think ye so.
Ye seem, to me, like one decreed
In love-adventures to succeed.

THE YOUNG CHARIOTEER.

What must one hear next? Proceed,
And the whole enigma read.

HERALD.

The eyes dark, glancing; locks as black as night,
That the bright gems bound round them make more
bright;

Digitized by Google

The splendid mantle from the shoulders flowing,
In all the pride of gold and purple glowing!
For a fair girl one might easily mistake ye;
And for weal or woe, as yet, should a maiden take ye,
To learn the A B C she would strive to make ye.

THE YOUNG CHARIOTEER.

And he, within this splendid chariot seated,
How, fittingly, should he be announced and greeted?

HERALD.

A king, beneath whose gentle reign,
Happy they who can obtain
Grace and favour! they need never,
After aught beyond, endeavour.
Wants he knows, ere they express them,
And to know is to redress them.
He deems his best prerogative
Is not to possess, but give.

THE YOUNG CHARIOTEER.

Leave off with this brief notice, if you dare!
I beg you'll give a full description, sir.

HERALD.

Praise, the worthy never care for,
But the task I am prepared for.
His healthy face like the moon at full is;
His teeth are pearls, his cheeks are rubies;
Round his turban diamonds are strung,
Strings of gems to the girdle are hung

Digitized by Google

That binds his richly 'broidered dress.
His air and bearing nothing less
Than long-unquestioned rule express.

THE YOUNG CHARIOTEER.

The great Plutus, God of Wealth,
To your Emperor sends health
And greeting!

HERALD.

Now announce yourself.

THE YOUNG CHARIOTEER.

I'm the abundance, I'm the poesy,
I'm the poet that he calls forth,
When his blessings are most lavishly
Scattered over the joyous earth.
Countless treasures, besides, are mine:
Rich as Plutus himself am I.
Beauty, and splendour, and rosy wine
Make me—what he is—a god divine.
I share in his power; his wants I supply.

HERALD.

Cease boasting. That you have beauty, all agree;
And now your skill and power let us see.

THE YOUNG CHARIOTEER.

I but snap my fingers, and forthwith spring,
Glancing and glistening from the car,—
Here, of orient pearls a string;

[*Keeps snapping his fingers all round.*

Digitized by Google

There, rich drops to hang in the ear;
There, a coronet rich and rare;
Brooches, bracelets, beyond compare;
Beautiful little tongues of fire,
That fitfully flash, and then expire.

HERALD.

How absorbed and delighted the crowd appear!
They almost devour the giver.
He snaps, and the jewels disappear,
As if in a dream! Did I ever
Think to be shown a new trick!—but there!
One, in his grasp, as quick as thought,
The prize, that came wavering by him, hath caught!
He loosens a gem from the glittering band,
And lo, a beetle crawls in his hand!
He flings by what worthless he supposes,
And the crowd stare, and turn up their noses.
The rest are surely real?—scarce uttered
The word, than, as butterflies, off they've fluttered.
How dares he such splendid promise hold forth
On the strength of what is so little worth?

THE YOUNG CHARIOTEER.

Masquers! I only seek—saving your presence—
To show ye the mere husk and shell of knowledge:
To dive profoundly for its subtle essence
Is not the business of the heralds' college;

Digitized by Google

It tasks superior minds than are trained there.
Yet, to furnish every proof that I play fair
The case admits.— [*He turns to Plutus.*
I turn to you, Commander,
Not doubting to my questions your prompt answer.
Pronounce, then:—To my charge hast thou not given
Four wing'd steeds, swifter than the winds of heaven?
Do I not guide them whither thou requirest?
Am I not where thou pointest, at a wish;
'Yond the eagle soaring, for aught thou desirest,
Or exploring ocean's dark gulphs, like a fish?
How oft have I fought for thee—victorious ever—
And laid at thy feet the laurels I did gather?
Or when, in a wreath, they decked thy brows divine,
The hand and skill that wove it, whose but mine?

PLUTUS.

I bear witness that thou'rt spirit of my spirit,
That all thou dost is after my own mind,
That thy treasures are beyond what I inherit,
That my highest honours are to thee assigned.
Thou hast for me the palm of victory won—
Thou, the right arm of my might!
Finally, thou art my beloved son,
In whom I most delight.

THE YOUNG CHARIOTEER (*to the crowd*).

I have been, amongst ye all,

Digitized by Google

Heaps of costly presents throwing,
Near and distant, great and small;
Even now, ye all are glowing
With bright flame-tongues, through a haze
Flickering here and flickering there,
Though rarely upward, glance their rays,
That now rest, now disappear.
But, on whom a flame decays,
He'll get sadly scorched, I fear.

FEMALE PRATTLE.

He, that's sitting up behind
That young harlequin, you'll find
(He, there, in that coach and four)
Is a conjuror; and, what's more,
He's never hungry nor thirsty;
And if you pinch,
He does not flinch.
Likes of him—oh gracious mercy!
Never yet was seen before.

THE FORSAKEN ONE.

I loathe the whole sex, from my very soul!
That once 'twas otherwise is my undoing.—
That the household matters should not go to ruin
Under my wife's control,
I called on Avarice to guard my home.
Nothing went out, though inward much did come:

Digitized by Google

I zealously inspected chests and packages.
But my spouse soon waxed angry at my care;
Though she, unused to save and spare,
Had hardly managed things a year
Before all went in routs and rackages,
And we were left forlorn! But females never
Are much inclined to saving;
And they are the worst payers, ever,
Who have less cash than craving;
Though man alone suffers from such behaving,
Because he only can be sent to prison.
When this takes place, and causes a division,
What is the wife's behaviour?
Why, she feasts and dresses more and more;
And, to his cost, her paramour
Finds that to gain her favour
Is more expensive than before.
Avarice is not a female, I am sure.

FEMALE RINGLEADER.

You odious gripes! may the griffins covet you!
'Tis a pack of lies; 'tis slander, all you speak!
To set the men up, you make this ado:
They are bad enough as 'tis, you Jerry Sneak!

THE FEMALE CROWD.

Ha! you scarecrow! give him a slap.
You threaten us, with your wizened face?

Digitized by Google

Who'd be afraid of such a chap?
Seize on him! grab him! do make haste—
The dragons are only wood and paste.

HERALD.

Keep back, keep back! you see this wand? hey dey!
I shall wield it in a trice: back, back! I say.
See how the untrained hags, like furies, rush
And close around the wiverned car, to crush;
But lo, the angered monsters shake their scales,
And spit forth fire, and lash their arrowy tails;
And back the scarecrows fly, head over heels!

[*Plutus descends from the chariot.*

He alights with regal grace, I needs must say;
And signs the winged team to start away;
And away with them had also well nigh gone,
The chest, with Avarice sitting thereupon,
But somehow both manage to get set down.

PLUTUS

(*to the Young Charioteer*).

Thou'rt free from all incumbrance—free as the air;
So now start off for thy own, thy native sphere,—
Which is not here, in this wild chequered maze,
Stuck in that frame, exposed to ignorant gaze;
But, where the azure heavens, o'er thee bending,
Are pure as thy pure glory; where, extending
Their leafy solitudes, old forests spread.

Digitized by Google

There thou'rt confided in, there thou wert bred;
There thy choice gifts are valued by the fair.
Away, boy, and create an empire there.

THE YOUNG CHARIOTEER.

To be thy worthy herald is my pride;
And 'tis my joy that we are near allied.
Where *thou* art is abundance; where *I* rule
All is magnificence, all hearts are full
Of healthful life, and happiness, and glee.
To *thee* does man devote himself? to *me*?
Thy followers may in weary idlesse doze,
But mine are ever active, to life's close.
Not as *thine*, in secret, are *my* deeds effected:
Open as day, I but breathe, and am detected.
Hail and farewell! With joy I grasp the rein:
But breathe the wish—I'm at thy side again.

[*He's off as he came.*

PLUTUS.

Now is the time the treasure-chest to unclasp;
And I, as locksmith, undertake that task.
Herald! your wand: at a touch the lid upflies!
Lo, a capacious cauldron meets your eyes,
With molten gold, seething and bubbling o'er,
Raging and glowing, ready to devour
The costly ornaments that round it lie—
A countless store of splendid jewelry.

Digitized by Google

EXCLAMATIONS OF THE CROWD.

My stars! what overflow of wealth—
Gold vases, large enough for one to swim—
The chest is full, up to the very brim—
Ready-coined ducats! what a deal of pelf!—
It makes one's very heart go pit-a-pat!
I did not think there was so much as that
In all the world!—Well, I do so admire!—
I could wallow in it, as pigs do in mire.
Now's your time, my boys—quick, and you've won it:
Like a flash of lightning, let's stoop down upon it;
Let's pounce upon't, like the tiger on his prey!—
Let's bear off chest and all, boys—that's the way.

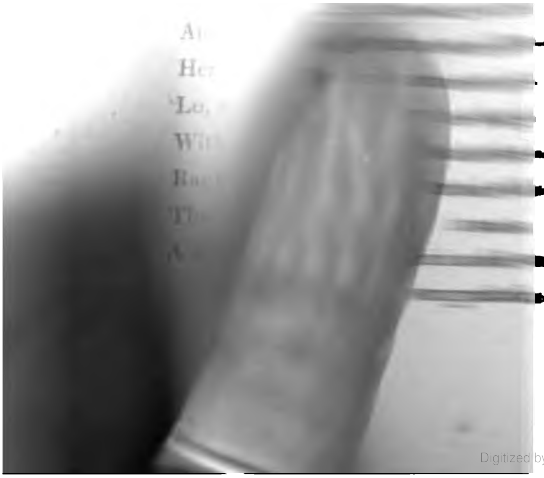
HERALD.

Fools! why need you forward poke?
Don't you know 'tis all a joke?
Tonight, there's nothing but mere shows here;
D'ye think 'tis real gold that glows here?
Yourselves are the counters, mongrel host!
As we'll soon show ye, to your cost.
But what are your realities?
Conceits, appearances, and lies.
Muffled Plutus! drive me back
These intruders, in a crack.

PLUTUS.

Your staff—for that's at hand, and fit—

Digitized by Google



Digitized by Google

PLUTUS.

ve patience yet, my worthy friend:
danger is by no means at an end.

AVARICE.

are always to the front rank thronging;
e forbidden fruit they're ever longing.
I yet so old or uninspired!—
e wife's a thing to be desired.
s it costs nothing, I will go
ce 'midst this o'erflowing show.
s prudence; 'greedy ears may suck
ful in; use pantomime;
nk, with hand and foot make sign;
and may you have good luck!'
e noise and bustle, [hustle;
umids
laugh, and fight, and talk, and
joke, and
gold, to its wish, can temper clay;
its mood may all things sway.

HERALD.

has seized
re simpleton?
the gold li
as begun:
eager
n:
and yield
is hand!
flattens
a ball;
mains
ny troth,
s to the

Digitized by Google

May I request the loan of it?
I plunge it in the glowing heat—
And advise ye, masquers, to retreat!
How it flashes! how it splashes!
Just a hint, my friends, to all: ye
Had best move off, or I shall scald ye,
Without compunction. Off, off! if you please.—
To draw the circle now my time I seize.

CLAMOUR AND THRONGING.

Lord! how he splashes away!—
Deuce take the hindmost, I say!—
He's scalded me in the face!—
Make haste! make haste! make haste!—
Move back, move back, behind there, pray!
We're all of us lost if you don't give way!—
I wish I had but a pair of wings!—
Faster, faster, you stupid things!—

PLUTUS.

The crowd are completely scared,—
And yet, not one of them singed!
The circle once more is cleared;
But, to hinder its being infringed
Any more by that lawless band,
I'll taboo it all round with the wand.

HERALD.

A noble work, done in a noble way?
How shall we show our gratitude, I pray?

Digitized by Google

PLUTUS.

Have patience yet, my worthy friend:
Your danger is by no means at an end.

AVARICE.

Women are always to the front rank thronging;
For some forbidden fruit they're ever longing.
Nor am I yet so old or uninspired!—
A handsome wife's a thing to be desired.
And today, as it costs nothing, I will go
With confidence 'midst this o'erflowing show.
'But mum,' says prudence; 'greedy ears may suck
'More than is needful in; use pantomime;
'Hem, nod, and wink, with hand and foot make sign;
'Tempt cautiously—and may you have good luck!'
So now, away amidst the noise and bustle, [hustle;
Where they joke, and laugh, and fight, and talk, and
Let's try how gold, to its wish, can temper clay;
That metal to its mood may all things sway.

HERALD.

What whim has seized the meagre simpleton?
To knead the gold like dough he has begun:
He looks as eager as a starving man:
How soft and yielding 'tis aneath his hand!
Now he flattens it; now rolls it in a ball;
But it remains mis-shapen, after all.
He turns to the women yonder: by my troth,

Digitized by Google

With unseemly gestures!—screaming, they run off.
The rogue's versed in evil practices, that's plain:
Violation of morality betides
Much mischief to himself, I fear; besides,
A silent looker-on I can't remain:
Give me my staff, to drive him off again.

PLUTUS.

He marks not what is threatening from without.
Let him enact his foolery, if he will.
They'll leave but small room for his tricks, I doubt.
Law is mighty, but necessity mightier still.

SHOUTING AND SINGING.

From cloud-concealed hills,
From forest dells,
A wild host comes rushing on,
With shouting, and laughter, and song,
In honour of mighty Pan.
Amidst the cleared ring,
With a bound, they spring.
They have knowledge that's hidden from man.

PLUTUS.

I know ye well, and also your god Pan.
Ye certainly are making reckless strides!
And I know more than many do, besides:
By me this narrow space hath been befriended.
May you be, by good destiny, attended!

Digitized by Google

But strange things *do* occur, to the most knowing·
Your troops don't seem to heed where they are going.

A WILD SONG.

Here's a fantastic show!
Here are strange uncouth things!
Leaping and bounding, on they go,
Like so many Bouquetins!
Robust, and shaggy, and strong,
Shouting and singing, they come!

FAWNS.

The fawns advance
In merry dance,
Oak wreaths, round
Their crisp locks bound,
Each of the gay troop wears;
Close to the curled head keeping,
And beyond it peeping,
Are their finely pointed ears;
Snub noses, tossed in the air,
And broad bronzed faces are there,
Not unpleasing to female taste.
Who hath ever the right hand withdrawn,
And refused for her partner a fawn—
She'll never dance more with lightness and grace.

Digitized by Google

SATYR.

With slender shanks, and feet like the goat,
The satyr comes bounding along:
A hunter on mountains 'neath which the clouds float,
He is sinewy, gaunt, and strong.

Round him, he stares with wonder and glee,
Who erst hath looked down, with disdain—
From heights where he ranged, like the mountain winds, free—
On the lowly dwellings of men.

Doth he now, midst their din and smoke, opine
They aught of enjoyment can give?
Oh no! in yon lofty world, pure and sublime,
Alone is he fitted to live.

GNOMES.

The elfin band,
Linked hand in hand,
Is tripping lightly by:
O'er the velvet green,
With sparkling sheen,
Pair after pair they hie.

Full soon, with bright
And tiny light,

Digitized by Google

Hither and thither, pass
  The busy swarm,
  Intent to form
Circle and cross on the grass;
  With shifting gleams,
  An ant-hill, seems
The myriad-twinkling mass.

  One family,
  From of old, we be
The leeches of the hills;
  Rock veins we lance,
  And thence, forth dance
The fresh and sparkling rills.

  We plough up stores
  Of glittering ores,
And cheer on each endeavour;
  Crying, Good luck!
  Have zeal and pluck!
We're friends of the good man, ever.

  Bright gold to day,
  That so, men may
Marry, and steal, we speed;
  Nor do the great,
  Who meditate
Huge slaughters, iron need.

Digitized by Google

And who withstands
The three commands,
Makes nought of the rest, be sure;
But that is, still,
Not all our ill—
So much, we might endure.

GIANTS.

We are wild men of the woods:
From Hyrcanian solitudes,
Wont of old to sally forth—
Naked giants—o'er the earth;
Rude boughs girded round our loins;
In our right hands mountain pines.
Such a body guard, the Pope
Round him may not dare to hope.

NYMPHS, IN CHORUS:
(*surrounding the great Pan*).

He comes! he comes! proclaim
The God, whose fame
Extends through earth's vast plan:
The mighty Pan!

Happiest they who, gaily bounding
In light dances, thus surround him.
Earnestly bent on good is he;
He willeth that all should joyous be;

Digitized by Google

He inspireth with heartsome glee
Whate'er the blue heavens span.
Frolicsome zephyrs are his fan;
Murmurs, to soothe him, each rippling brook;
In the noontide shade reclined,
If to sleep he be inclined,
Not a breath is stirred, not a leaf is shook,
Nor warbles a bird from his forest nook;
And the nymphs, whose bosoms thrill
With impulsive mirth, are still:
Like a carved statue, stands the liveliest fair;
Whilst plants, their most exquisite odours, there
Diffuse through the silent air.

But if, upraised with sudden power,
His awful voice resound,
Lo, lightnings flash, and wild waves roar—
As, o'er their boundless waste,
Sweepeth the furious blast.
Lo, the bravest stand aghast
At armies scattered, fleets no longer found,
As earthquakes rock the seas and palsied ground.
Oh then, frail man,
To whom honour may be due, honour accord!
Do homage to our sovereign lord—
The universal Pan!

Digitized by Google

DEPUTATION OF GNOMES (*to the great Pan*).

Fathoms deep, lie treasures splendid
In caves dark and dread:
Save by magic wand befriended,
None may the lab'rinths thread.

In those central vaults of earth
Dwell the tiny gnomes,
Who, on lucky days, bring forth
Choice gifts from their homes.

See, beside thee, this pure spring
Gush at their command—
An offering to the sylvan king
From our elfin band.

Bounteous lord! 'neath thy command,
Take this noble flood:
Treasures, passing through thy hand,
Do the whole world good.

PLUTUS (*to the Herald*).

We'll exert, judiciously, our utmost skill,
And wait with confidence to see what chances.
Certes, most powerful sprites your circle fill;
Unruly are they all become, all horrible! [awful
Nor the present, nor coming times, will believe how
This is: but set it truly down, in thy protocol.

Digitized by Google

HERALD

(*taking hold of the staff, which Plutus retains*).

The great Pan has been beguiled,
Easily as a careless child,
By the dwarfish elfin choir,
Right amongst the streams of fire
That, now, from the whirlpool rise,
And now sink, before his eyes,
Through that opening dark and dread,
Whence the flames, from their deep bed,
Flare up 'midst the breezy skies.
How rejoiced, how pleased he seems
At the sparkling foam and gleams
Of the wondrous element,
In such radiance round him blent!—
Now, their haunts he'd fain discover,
And the fearful brink leans over.—
Lo! his beard is on fire! it blazes! it flies
Away, like a meteor, through the skies!
Flames, too, and crackles, his leafy crown!
In rush the throng, and their monarch surround.—
How soon, in lament, does rejoicing expire!
All are involved in the blaze,
That 'mongst them patters and plays;
Tongues of flame protrude and retire,
Lapping the scorched air

Digitized by Google

Round the pageant's funeral pyre.
Alas, the portentous glare!
Alas! the fearful sight!
Alas, the lament I'm doomed to hear!
Alas, this ne'er-to-be-forgotten night!
Alas! upon what miseries
The morn will rise!
Lo! I proclaim, both far and near,
Your emperor in the same dire plight,
Without a hope from flight!
Accursed be, for ever and for ever,
They who, for sacrifice, have led us hither!
Pine forests spread interminably round us,
And, with their resinous stems, on all sides, bound us;
Whilst, as the flames ascend their boughs among,
They bellow forth destruction's awful song.
Oh, youth! wilt thou never limit thy desire
To attainable and unforbidden joys?
Oh, mortal greatness! wouldst thou still climb higher,
And stretch thy impious daring to the skies?—
The flames ascend up many a tall pine, now,
And spread from top to top, from bough to bough;
A dome of fire, on glowing columns borne,
Is closing o'er us—whither shall we turn?
No path, no hope—our cup of wrath o'erflows—
Our prison's fiery walls around us close!

Digitized by Google

And of this imperial pomp, when daylight flashes
From the orient sky, shall nought be found but ashes.

PLUTUS.

Our might having thus been shown,
Now, then, be our mercy known!—
Strike, with hallowed wand, the ground,
Till it tremble and resound!
Call upon the spacious air
To gather vapours, far and near!
Hither fogs, in belted lines,
From the rivers and ravines!
Hither, ye that suck the main,
Pregnant clouds, and pour your rain!
All moist powers! your help we need:
We call upon ye, each and all;
Hither, with the lightnings speed,
And penetrate this fiery hall!——
To make scenes, to real spirits tragic,
One must go to work with magic.

Digitized by Google

A PLEASURE GARDEN.

Sunrise.

The EMPEROR. MEN *and* WOMEN *of the Court Household.*

FAUST, MEPHISTOPHELES, *both respectably dressed, in the accustomed fashion, but not conspicuously: both kneel.*

FAUST.

PARDON the outbreak, Sire, of the magic flames.

EMPEROR.

I enjoy such jokes as that, exceedingly.—
I found myself amidst a glowing sphere,
And almost thought I was another Pluto.
Night was around, and a wild rocky place
Was lighted up by heaps of burning coal;
Vividly from the whirlpool they flared up,
Forming a huge vault, ribbed with fiery beams;
Whilst, ever and anon, bright tongues of flame
Shot right up to the roof, and again withdrew;
And there, too, through a lengthened avenue
Bounded by columns formed of spiral flame,
I saw vast multitudes advance, and gather,
In deepening circles, round the bright saloon.

Digitized by Google

I recognized them all as of my court:
I seemed the chief of a myriad salamanders.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Thou art so, mighty lord! and every element
At once would hail thee as its rightful sovereign.
Fire thou'st already tried, and found obsequious:
Cast thyself into the sea, where it roars the wildest,
And thou'lt alight upon a pearly floor,
And bright green undulating billows, fringed
With purple, damasked o'er with priceless pearls,
Will form the walls of thy marine pavilion;
At every step, more splendid halls will open,
More gorgeous palaces will round thee rise;
New forms of rejoicing life will pay thee homage.
Lo! swarms, like glittering arrows, onward dart;
Lo! the sea monster, with his burnished mail,
In lonely pride advances; and see there,
Vividly gleaming, golden-scaled dragons,
And the shark, gliding round thee like a spectre,
Harmless, and charmed by thy presence, like the rest.
Hast ever, on a levee-day, beheld
Such throngs of courtiers gathered round thy throne?
And yet, the noblest thou hast not yet seen:
Lo! now, from their magnificent abodes—
Halls of aye-enduring freshness and delight—
Approach the inquisitive Nereids!

Digitized by Google

This, graceful, timid, to a fish-like form
Tapering below, is Thetis; and the other,
Peleus; they come to pay thee homage, and request
Thou 'lt fix thy throne on their Olympic hill.

EMPEROR.

I leave the realms of air in thy possession:
'Tis soon enough, as yet, to mount that throne.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

And, mighty sovereign, earth 's already thine.

EMPEROR.

Of the good genii, which art thou, I pray?
Thou seem'st direct from the thousand and one nights;
Thou hast the fertility of Scheherazade.
I 'll bestow on thee my very highest honours,
That thou mayst always be at hand with new ones
When, as oft chances, this old world grows tiresome.

MASTER OF THE HOUSEHOLD
(*entering hastily*).

Most mighty emperor! I never dreamt—
Standing in thy dread presence, I avow it—
That the announcement of the best good fortune
Could have given me the proud delight I feel.
Reckoning on ancient reckoning is paid off;
From extortionate usury—far more tormenting
Than hell's worst torments—I am wholly free!
I could not be a happier man in heaven.

Digitized by Google

COMMANDER OF THE FORCES

(*following close after*).

The soldiers are paid up, and in advance;
The army are all pleased, and re-engaged;
The militia feel new courage fire their veins;
Landlords, domestics—all are satisfied!

EMPEROR.

How your heart throbs! how your face brightens up!
How cheerily you advance!

TREASURER

(*who appears beside himself*).

Consult the person
By whom all this has been accomplished!

FAUST.

It becomes the Chancellor best, to explain the case.

CHANCELLOR

(*who advances slowly*).

How happy am I made, in my old age!
How wonderful are fate's mysterious leaves,
That change our sordid woes to glad abundance!

[*He reads.*]

"Know all whom it concerneth, by these presents,
That this doth represent one thousand crowns,
In good and lawful money of the realm,
Secured on sundry underground resources
Within the imperial realm: value received."

Digitized by Google

EMPEROR.

I see there has been crime—most guilty trickery!
Who has dared to forge the imperial signature?
Does such tremendous guilt remain unpunished?

TREASURER.

May't please your Majesty to call to mind
That yesternight yourself assigned the surety,
When, with the Chancellor and myself beside you,
The mighty Pan approached you, and thus spake:
"I offer, to thyself most sumptuous feasts,
And to thy subjects wealth, for a few quill-strokes."
'Twas executed by you, then and there,
'Midst a myriad shifting scenes and masking phantoms;
And the benefit was felt, at once, by all.
Notes were struck off, of the same form and tenor,
For ten, for twenty, fifty crowns, and so on,
Serving impartially for all alike,
And circulating through the whole procession.
The people were in raptures with the plan;
And you, instead of cities half in ruins,
And gloomy as the grave, may now behold
Gay busy swarms intent upon enjoyment,
Or upon business that may earn enjoyment.
Though long since, as our monarch, hailed and blessed,
You never yet were half so popular.
For the first time, the alphabet's conned o'er,
To make folks happy by its indications.

Digitized by Google

EMPEROR.

And my people have a pledge for real gold?
And the court's and army's full demands are satisfied?
It astounds me to have authorized such things!

MASTER OF THE HOUSEHOLD.

It would have been impossible to stop
Fugitives, that were off, like a flash of lightning.
The bank was made accessible to all:
The notes, sans favour or affection, changed
For so much coin as the written words expressed.
And now one half the world thinks of nought else
But feasting: butchers, bakers, publicans,
Are at their wits' end, to supply demands;
'God save the emperor!' from every cellar
Resounds, amidst the steam of roast and boiled,
Chorussed by clattering plates and ringing glasses:
Whilst the other half are flaunting in such finery
As turns their own vain heads, and over-labours
The shopmen measuring out, the tailors stitching.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

What's wit, sense, eloquence, compared with such
Mystic device, to gain love's precious favours?
One needs but stroll forth on the public walks,
And lo! the fair, as fine as peacocks, flaunting,
Send kindly glances from behind their fans,
To say: 'you've but to woo, and we are won.'

Digitized by Google

And who will plague themselves with purse or chest,
When precisely the same benefit's derivable
From a light, thin leaf?—that may be folded in
A love-letter, or hid in a lady's bosom;
That the priest may place 'twixt the pages of his bre-
[viary;
That relieves the soldier of his cumbrous girdle,
And gives him greater freedom and agility.
That I depreciate, by such seeming trifles,
High and glorious deeds, the emperor will pardon.

FAUST.

What abounding treasures, underneath the soil,
Are lying torpid—utterly profitless!
The most expansive thought would but comprise
A paltry portion of the wealth so hidden.
Spirits may best ope that profound to view:
What's boundless leave the unbounded to explore.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

These paper notes will serve to represent
Gold, jewels, aught one can mention or desire.
Without the plague of bartering and counting,
One may have love's or wine's intoxication;
And need we coin, there's the banker to convert them;
Are notes deficient? you've but to issue more;
Is a doubt cast on their validity?
Let what goods there will be brought into the mart,
Paper will purchase them, and shame the sceptic.

Digitized by Google

Folks, once accustomed to't, desire nought more.
Thus paper represents, and makes available,
All the vast wealth of these imperial realms.

EMPEROR.

Our realm doth owe to you its high prosperity:
Be the reward commensurate with the service!
We confide to you—of that high trust most worthy—
Our empire's lower regions: let the miners
Explore their depths solely as you direct.
Henceforth, associated with our treasurer,
Enjoy the high posts that our grace bestows:
The one presiding in the upper—one
In the lower portions of our broad domains.

TREASURER.

There will not be the least jealousy betwixt us:
I joy to have a magician for my colleague.

[*Exit with Faust.*

EMPEROR.

Now each and all at court shall taste our bounty,
On condition that they make their wishes known.

PAGE (*receiving*).

I'll lead a happier and more joyous life.

ANOTHER (*in like manner*).

I'll get, for my sweetheart, chains and rings forthwith.

CHAMBERLAIN (*accepting*).

I'll drink two flasks for one, of generous wine.

Digitized by Google

ANOTHER (*like the last*).

The dice already turn to try my pocket.

FEUDAL CHIEF (*with deliberation*).

I'll free my castle and domain from debt.

ANOTHER (*like the last*).

I'll add this present to my former store.

EMPEROR.

We expect loyal zeal and daring deeds:
But to know you well is to be sure of that.
The treasury flourishes, and all are stirring,
Though so restive and indifferent before.

THE FOOL (*approaching*).

Grant me, too, of the bounty you distribute.

EMPEROR.

What, thou alive still!—'Twill all go in drink.

FOOL.

A magic leaf! I don't quite understand it.

EMPEROR.

I can well believe that, from thy foolish conduct.

FOOL.

Others have fallen that don't know what I do.

EMPEROR.

He'll show thee the road to ruin: take it thither.

[*Exit.*

FOOL.

Five thousand crowns should be paid into my hands.

Digitized by Google

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Ah, two-legged puffball! thou uprisen once more?

FOOL.

I've been done for oft, but never so completely.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Truly, by sweating thy enjoyment's earned.

FOOL.

Prithee look here! is this good money's worth?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

'Twill yield thee all gullet or guts can desire.

FOOL.

And will it purchase house, and land, and stock?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

All that it promises, it will fulfil.

FOOL.

And castle, forest, lake, and deer-park, too?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Surely! and I advise that you rule strictly.

FOOL.

This night I'll sleep in possession of property.

[*Exit.*

MEPHISTOPHELES.

At least let none gainsay, from hence-
Forth, that fools have some common sense.

Digitized by Google

A DARK GALLERY.

FAUST, MEPHISTOPHELES.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Why dost thou drag me to this gloomy place?
There surely is no want of entertainment,
Nor of convenience for jokes and trickery,
Within there, 'mongst that well-packed courtly throng.

FAUST.

Don't bore me with your talk: in former days
You might uphold yourself on such foundation;
Now, I require prompt deeds, not wordy sophistry.
I am tormented for more exhibitions:
The master of the household and the chamberlain
Tease me incessantly. The emperor wishes,
Those masterpieces of the human race
Helen and Paris, in their bodily forms,
To see forthwith: come, quick! let it be done!
I must not break my word; come! set to work.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

'Twas mere insanity to promise this.

FAUST.

Thou hast no consideration—not a jot—
To what thy magic tends: we've made him rich,

Digitized by Google

And so, of course, he wants amusement now.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

And you, of course, expect this, at a wish;
But only by degrees can we advance
In this new excursion to a foreign realm:
As poachers, we must needs incur fresh guilt.
Dost think that Helen can be conjured up
As easily as the paper ghosts of guilders?
Of witchcraft's spinning spirits, elves, and such like,
I will with pleasure get a fresh supply;
But devils' sweethearts, howe'er one may scold,
Will never pass for bona-fide heroines.

FAUST.

That's the old, unsatisfying, dubious whine!
The father of all obstacles art thou:
For each performance thou demand'st fresh wages.
I know it can be managed at a breath—
Thou might'st call them up whilst I was turning round.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

The pagans have their own appropriate hell,
And won't obey my call: yet there are means.

FAUST.

Speak! tell me instantly! what are the means?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

I unfold greater mysteries with reluctance.—
Throned goddesses, in holy solitude

Digitized by Google

Reposing, where there is nor space nor time—
It is most difficult to speak with them.
MOTHERS, the word is.

FAUST (*shrieking out*).

Mothers!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

It makes thee shudder.

FAUST.

Mothers! Mothers!—The sound is wonderful!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

So is the mystery. Goddesses, unknown
To mortals, named by us unwillingly.
Thou mayst dive in the abyss and find their home:
On *thee* alone be the guilt of such research.

FAUST.

Point out the way.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Plain, facile, trackless way!
To regions where is no perplexity;
The unobtained by prayer, the unintreated for!
Art thou prepared? There are no locks nor bars
Guarding the entrance I propose to thee.
There perfect solitude will close thee round.—
Of a real desert hast thou any notion?

FAUST.

Spare thy breath, prithee! this mysterious stuff

Digitized by Google

Smells of the witch's kitchen, long since done with.
Must I not drift on as the world is drifting,
Teaching the empty, learning emptiness?—
I speak with perfect reason, when I say,
The contradictory, as I advance,
Resoundeth doubly loud. And must one go
To solitude—to the desert—to obtain this?
Where nothing is; where one must live alone,
Neglected utterly; and after all
Is done, be given over to the Devil?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

And must cross yon seemingly-unbounded ocean,
Breasting its onward, aye-advancing, waves,
'Till before thee, o'er its verge, destruction dawns.
So far material forms will meet thy gaze:
Thou mayst see dolphins sport in the calm green sea;
Mayst still see moving clouds, sun, moon, and stars;
But in the vast eternal void, beyond,
Thou wilt not hear the sound of thy own steps;
Thou wilt find nought substantial to repose on.

FAUST.

Thou speakest as at first all mystagogues do,
The trusting neophytes deceiving ever.
Hark ye! thou sendest me to yonder void,
That so I may augment thy power and skill:
A cat's-paw, dragging chesnuts from the fire

Digitized by Google

For thy especial use.—But ON's the word!
In thy nothing, I hope everything to find.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

I must pronounce thy eulogy at parting:
Thy knowledge of the Devil is profound!
Here, take this key.

FAUST.

This petty thing!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Pray grasp it
Firmly, and do not underrate its worth.

FAUST.

It augments in my hand—light flashes from it.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Learn now the power its possession gives thee!
That magic key will guide thee to the place.
Follow implicitly the course it points:
It will lead thee to the Mothers.

FAUST (*shuddering*).

Mothers! that word's like an electric shock!
What is there in't that thus can startle me?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Are thy faculties so very limited,
That a new word disturbs them? wouldst thou hear
Nothing but what's been dinning thee already?
Besides, the most wondrous things cease to excite

Digitized by Google

When they've been known familiarly and long,
Sounding more faintly, and more distant, ever.

FAUST.

But I seek not pleasure from torpidity.
That shudder sprang from humanity's better portion.
How, too, such sensibility enhances
The world, to one who seeks that dread profound!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Sink!—mount! I might have said, 'tis one and the same.
In yonder form-emancipated space,
Escape the originating, and behold
The ancient bygones unexistent now.
As the cloud-cover eagerly absorbs
The crowd urged onward by continual pressure,
See how the key swings! hold it for your life!

FAUST.

And if it does, I feel new strength to hold it:
I feel my breast expand with the mighty task.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Yon glowing tripod will the finite show thee,
Even in the lowest, most profound abyss;
Formations, transformations, idols of
All creatures—the unwearying amusement
Of the Eternal Mind—will float around thee.
They'll not mark THEE, for they can see nought but
shadows.

Digitized by Google

Come, nerve thyself! take heart, for the peril's great.
Approach the tripod,—touch it with the key.

[*Faust takes a firm and commanding attitude by the tripod, with the key in his hand.*

MEPHISTOPHELES (*contemplating him*).

Well and boldly done! He obeys instructions
Like a true knight.—Let joy not o'er-exalt thee;
But with calmness and sobriety descend,
And forth again with it, ere they've time to note thee.
When once thou hast returned with it again,
Hero and heroine thou mayst call from night—
The first that ever dared such enterprize.
That done, thou must guide them by the rules of magic,
When the incense-clouds transform themselves to gods.

FAUST.

Well!—Now, what next?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Thou'rt panting to descend:
Stamp, and you'll sink; stamp, and you'll rise again.

[*Faust stamps, and sinks.*

As the key's of use for the best purpose only,
I'm curious to see if he'll come back.

Digitized by Google

A WELL-LIGHTED SALOON.

EMPEROR *and* PRINCES. *Court in commotion.*

CHAMBERLAIN (*to Mephistopheles*).

You're still in debt to us that spirit scene:
Prepare to give it! the emperor grows impatient.

MASTER OF THE HOUSEHOLD.

He does indeed: a favour has been asked,
And to delay is to insult his majesty.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

For this very purpose my companion's gone.
He already has discovered where to seize them;
And labours now, in studious solitude,
Because, to call or wealth or beauty forth
Needs the profoundest magic of the wise.

MASTER OF THE HOUSEHOLD.

The arts you both practise are one and the same:
The emperor wills that this be promptly done.

A BLONDE (*to Mephistopheles*).

An't please your honour—just a single word!
My complexion's fair at present, as you see;
But, all the odious summer through, 'tis spoilt
By spots of brownish red, sprinkled by hundreds,
And vexatiously concealing the fair skin.—

Digitized by Google

Pray give me a prescription to prevent it!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

What pity, that so fair a treasure should,
In May, be freckled like a panther-cat!
Take the spawn of frogs, the tongues of toads—mix;
Distil with sadness in the fullest moonshine;
Use the pure abstersive lotion in her wane;
Then without cloud-spot will the springtide come.

A BRUNETTE.

The crowd is pressing round you more and more.
Pray you some remedy! I've a withered foot,
That hinders me from moving gracefully,
And plagues me when I dance, or even in walking.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Allow me just to step on it with mine.

THE BRUNETTE.

That would only be appropriate in lovers.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

My foot, child, hath amazing virtue in't:
Straightness produces straightness—and so on:
Whatever part's diseased, some kindred part
Must be employed to heal't; thus, foot cures foot,
And other members corresponding ones.
Come on at once—I shan't repeat the offer.

THE BRUNETTE (*shrieking*).

Oh—h! your tread's like that of a horse's hoof!

Digitized by Google

MEPHISTOPHELES.

It carries healing with it: you, already,
May join in the graceful dance with zest and spirit.

A LADY (*pressing forward*).

Let me through! my suffering's past all endurance!
My very heart's blood boils! 'Till yesterday,
He lived but on my smiles; and now—the wretch!
He talks to her, and turns his back on me.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

A very critical case. But list to me:
You must manage to get near him quietly,
And with this coal, draw, in this sort of way,
A cross on his sleeve, his mantle, and his shoulder:
This will cause true repentance in his heart.
And then, the coal must instantly be swallowed;
But let water, wine, nor aught come near thy lips,
To wash it down. Thenceforward, he's thy slave.

LADY.

Is't not poisonous?

MEPHISTOPHELES (*angrily*).

Rudeness! disrespect!
You must travel far to get such coal as this—
From an old funeral pile that was well stirred.

PAGE.

I am in love! pray don't suppose me drunk.

Digitized by Google

MEPHISTOPHELES (*aside*).

I know not whether to hear more or not.

[*To the Page.*]

Thou must not fix thy happiness on the youngest,
But learn to value those of maturer age.—

[*Others throng round.*

More applications? What a strife there is!
Truth is my best assistant, after all.
But this gets troublesome.—Oh, Mothers! Mothers!
Let Faust be set at liberty forthwith.

[*Looking round.*]

Already, in the hall the lights burn dim,
And the whole court moves onward in a mass;
I mark them, through long distant galleries,
Approaching in successive trains, with pleasure;
And now they congregate in the great hall,
Where of old (but they're scarce now) the knights assembled.
The walls are hung with tapestry, and the niches
Adorned with armour. Here there needs, I think,
Few magic words: the ghosts will find themselves
So perfectly at home.

Digitized by Google

THE HALL OF THE KNIGHTS.

The lights burning dimly.

The EMPEROR *and* COURT *have retired.*

HERALD.

By virtue of my office, the direction
Of the mystic show, produced for your inspection,
To me's confided; as also to explain
Its sense, which else you'd puzzle at in vain.
Here's standing room or seats for all who need,
Lo, ushers, with their wands, the emperor now precede.
From behind the tapestry will rise each sprite,
To be conveniently of all in sight.
Now the monarch's seated, with his staff around;
The benches occupied, crowded the background;
Sweethearts beside their sweethearts, in the gloom
Of this ghostly hour, having managed to find room,
And all adjusted, duly stationed all,
We now may venture forth, the ghost to call.

[*Trumpet sounds.*

ASTROLOGER.

The tapestry curls back from the glowing brand!
The rending wall on either side retires!

Digitized by Google

Illumined by a strange mysterious light,
A theatre appears, far backward stretching;
And lo! I stand on the proscenium of it.

MEPHISTOPHELES

(*emerging from the sulphur-pit*).

I hope the permission of all here assembled:
The orations of the Devil need a prompter.

[*To the Astrologer.*]

The student's motions unto thee are known,
And thou wilt understand my whispers perfectly.

ASTROLOGER.

Behold, by magic power, to all displayed,
With its huge columns and its ponderous roof,
An ancient temple, of such massive strength
As had sustained the giant Atlas, when,
In the olden time, he upheld the vaulted heavens.

ARCHITECT.

That, I suppose, must be the antique style.
I cannot praise such an unwieldy structure,
Which all, of any taste, must needs condemn
As a clumsy, uncouth, overladen mass.
I love the graceful clustering shafts, that spread
Into interminable curves and tracery,
High overhead, with pointed arches, joining
Like the magnificent aisles of an old forest—
Such soul-uplifting fanes as we now raise.

Digitized by Google

ASTROLOGER.

Receive with awe the star-permitted vision.
Be Reason silenced by the magic spell;
But let Fancy—the magnificent, the daring—
Be free to follow her excursive whims.
Now gaze on what you eagerly desired,
And which surpasseth all you could conceive of.

FAUST *rises up on the opposite side of the proscenium.*

ASTROLOGER.

A wonder-worker, dressed in priestly garb,
Has accomplished what he boldly undertook.
From depths profound, a tripod rises with him.
With upraised hands, he invokes a blessing on
His high attempt, that fate may be propitious.

FAUST (*very politely*).

In your name, Mothers—ye that are enthroned
Amidst the unbounded! ye that abide
In utter solitude, and yet are social!
Types of existences, ceaselessly active,
Yet unendued with life! ye, to whom all
The various shapes of splendour, power, and beauty
Return, because they must for ever be!
And ye assign them place, all-mastering powers,
In the blue tent of day, in the vaults of night;
These, to be found amidst life's joyous course;

Digitized by Google

Those, to be searched out by audacious magic.
With perfect faith in you, abounding powers!
I trust to call forth what by all's so wished for.

ASTROLOGER.

The glowing key hath scarcely touched the bowl,
When lo! a fragrant mist's diffused around—
Creeping, expanding, circling; blending now
In wreathing clouds, now parting and retiring;
And now, behold the spirit-master's skill!
Imperceptibly diffused amidst the vapour,
Aerial sounds are heard; the columns, too,
Resound like breathing flutes; the cornices
Seem all instinct with living harmony.
But lo! the temple is already sinking!
The vapour sinks too! o'er the flower-pranked ground,
A beautiful youth, to a measured air, steps forth,
Whom to announce were needless superfluity,
For who but knows, at once, the graceful Paris?

FIRST LADY.

What a splendid specimen of vigorous youthhood!

SECOND.

As fresh and juicy as the downy peach!

THIRD.

Oh! the incense-breathing, finely-curving lips!

FOURTH.

What nectar, from such goblet, might one sip!

Digitized by Google

FIFTH.

Without the aid of ornament, how lovely!

SIXTH.

He'll very soon display his graceful action.

A KNIGHT.

'Tis my belief, this phantom knight perceives
Neither the princes nor the courtiers present.

ANOTHER.

Oh, now the youth looks very fair, of course,
Because half naked! but we must behold him
In harness, ere true judgment can be formed.

A LADY.

Gently he lays him down, to be admired.

A KNIGHT.

His lap might form for you a pleasant couch!

ANOTHER.

Gracefully o'er his head he curves the arm.

CHAMBERLAIN.

The unmannered churl! such behaviour is past bearing.

LADY.

The lords are at a loss what fault to find.

THE FORMER.

Thus, sulkily, to couch in the emperor's presence!

LADY.

Undoubtedly he deems himself alone.

THE FORMER.

What a spectacle!—He *must* show proper courtesy.

Digitized by Google

LADY.

Soft sleep has overpowered the graceful youth.

THE FORMER.

Actually snoring! what impertinence!

YOUNG LADY (*enraptured*).

What scent is blending with the smoking incense?
What a refreshing cordial to the heart!

THE ELDER ONES.

It makes one sigh from the heart's inmost depths!
From himself, it is, the sweet perfume exhales.

THE OLDEST.

The ambrosial scents, diffusing through the air,
Spring from the flowery couch on which he rests.

HELENA *makes her appearance.*

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Here's what they long for! Now they'll let me rest.
Unquestionably handsome though she be,
They'll ne'er be brought to acknowledge it—not they.

ASTROLOGER.

For the present there is nought for me to do,
So I'll enact the courtier, and stand idle.
How beautiful! Had I a tongue of fire,
I would sing of beauty's praise for evermore!
Those she appears to are beside themselves;
Those she belongs to are most proudly happy.

Digitized by Google

FAUST.

Can my eyes be trusted? Beauty, gushing forth
Directly from its source, o'erfloods my heart!
What blest reward that awful journey gains me!
How hath the world's dread void to me unclosed!
What care I for the priesthood, since she's mine?
My heart's first wish so strong and so enduring!
Life's breathing vigorous impulses I've wasted:
Ah! had I known thee from my bygone days!
The lovely form that, once before, enraptured me,
In that blest magic mirror, was no more
Than a faint shadow of such heavenly beauty!
Thou art the one o'ermastering emotion,
To guide and harmonize the jarring passions:
To thee I owe desire, life, worship, madness.

MEPHISTOPHELES (*from the prompter's box*).

Attention, pray! and fail not in your criticisms.

AN ELDER LADY.

Full, and well formed, but then—the head's too small.

A YOUNGER.

See what a foot! it cannot well be clumsier.

A DIPLOMATIST.

I've seen princesses much resembling her:
To me, she's beautiful from head to foot.

A COURTIER.

With what gentle grace she glides towards the sleeper!

Digitized by Google

LADY.

How plain she looks, beside that lovely image!

POET.

Radiant with beauty, from her sparkling eyes!

A LADY.

Endymion and Luna! such the espousal!

THE FORMER.

Just so! O'er him the goddess seems to sink,
As, stooping, she drinks in his fragrant breath.
A kiss! oh, enviable, oh, consummate bliss!

DUENNA.

Before them all! well, that's egregious folly!

FAUST.

Tremendous favour! that boy——

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Peace! be still!
Pray let the vision do whate'er it lists.

A COURTIER.

She glides with light step from him! he awakes!

A LADY.

She's looking round, to see if she's observed.

COURTIER.

He's astounded at the unlooked-for miracle!

LADY.

But small her wonder—she saw him before.

COURTIER.

With modest coyness, she turns slowly towards him.

Digitized by Google

LADY.

Ah! I perceive, she adopts that wily system!
Men, ever, blindly fall into its snares!
He fully thinks himself her first real fancy.

KNIGHT.

That's the form for me!—majestic—beautiful!

LADY.

The prostitute! nothing can be more vulgar.

PAGE.

What rapture would it be, to fill his place!

COURTIER.

In such a net, who would not be entangled!

LADY.

That jewel must have passed through many a hand.
Its setting, too, seems somewhat worse for wear.

ANOTHER.

The minx was ruined when but ten years old.

KNIGHT.

The best, all grasp at—when occasion offers:
I'd be content with the beautiful remainder.

A MAN OF LEARNING.

I view them plainly; yet, I'm free to confess,
They even surpass the notions I had formed.
I put unquestioned faith in classic records, [Trojans
And thence have gathered, that even the greybeard
Were fascinated by her glowing charms:

Digitized by Google

To me, she seems not a jot less adapted
To fascinate the present age as well:
I'm far from young—yet she bewitches me.

ASTROLOGER.

A boy no longer—but a hero bold—
He clasps her in his arms! he overpowers her!
With manly arms, he uplifts her, and prepares
To bear her off!

FAUST.

Audacious fool! hold—hold!
Heed'st thou not? hear'st thou not? 'tis past enduring!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

That silly ghost-play's of thy own creating.

ASTROLOGER.

But one word more: from its catastrophe,
This performance must be styled, THE RAPE OF HELEN.

FAUST.

Foul robbery!—Do I stand here a cypher?
Do I not grasp the key, that guided me [horrors
In safety, through the waves—through the gloomy
Of awful solitude—hither to this firm station?
Here I've sound footing; here is reality;
Here doth the spirit dare to combat spirits!
'Twas I that rescued her: she's doubly mine!
I dared ye, Mothers! ye must grant her to me!
Who once beholds her, never would forgo her.

Digitized by Google

ASTROLOGER.

Faust! Faust! what dost thou?—He had power to raise
The form that maddens and o'erpowers him.—
He points the key at the youth! he touches him!
Woe! woe! in a moment—in a single moment!

[*Explosion—Faust is stretched on the ground—the spirits disappear in smoke.*

MEPHISTOPHELES,

(*bearing off Faust on his shoulders*).

What a mess you've made on't! got all the fools 'gainst us, yonder,
And the Devil himself, at last, into a blunder!

[*Darkness and tumult.*

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

ACT II.

Faust's high-vaulted narrow Gothic Study, as formerly, unchanged.

MEPHISTOPHELES *steps from behind one of the curtains: on his raising the curtain,* FAUST *is observed behind it, stretched on one of his father's old couches.*

MEPHISTOPHELES.

HERE the unhappy, the deceived one, lies,
In heavy love-bonds, difficult to loosen!
The senses of the man whom Helen witches
Are not so very easily restored.
[*Looking round him.*]
As I look round me, all appears unchanged
And unmolested: the stained glass, methinks,
Is more obscure than ever, and the cobwebs
Increased and matted thicker than of yore;
The paper's ancient hue hath grown more yellow—
But every thing remains *in statu quo:*
The very pen lies where Faust laid it down,
When he had signed his contract with the Devil;

Digitized by Google

Yes, the same drop of blood encrusts the slit,
With which, to execute it, I enticed him:
The greatest curiosity-collector
Would be congratulated by his friends
On the possession of so choice a rarity.
The old gown, too, on its old hook is hanging,
Reminding me of that droll incident,
My giving his first lesson to the boy—
In following which, perchance, he wastes his youthhood.
Truly, its shaggy lining stirs, once more,
My old desire to enact the teacher's part.
Of the recollection one may well be proud,
Who taught with such a rectitude of purpose.

[*He shakes the gown, which he has taken from the peg: beetles, moths, father-long-legs, &c. fly out.*

CHORUS OF INSECTS.

Welcome! right welcome,
Our old benefactor!
Once more to this cell come,
To see how we act here.
By you, in a trance,
Were we tranquilly sown;
But we knew, at a glance,
Our parent, and come
Around thee to dance,
And gratefully hum.

Digitized by Google

'The fiend, in the bosom,
Once hid itself so,
And was driven forth, through some
Such shaking, we know.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

How this young joyous brood surprises me!
Let one but sow, and, in time, one's sure to reap.
I give the old fleece but a single shake,
And all sorts of odd things come fluttering forth.—
Away the little darlings speed, to hide
In chinks and corners, every where around;
Amongst old crucibles and dusty glasses,
In parchment scrolls embrowned by age and smoke,
'Midst piles of every kind of antique lumber—
In the hollow-eyed scull, with its unchanging grin:
To live amongst such dirt and filth as this
Must engender a perpetual ill humour.

[*Puts on the gown.*

But come, old gown! once more adorn my shoulders:
I am become the principal today.
Yet what avails it, so to style myself?
Where are the folks, my title to acknowledge?

[*He pulls the bell: its all-penetrating tone resounds, and thereon the halls tremble, and the doors spring open.*

Digitized by Google

SERVITOR,

(*groping his way through the long dark gallery*).

What a dread sound! and what a shock it causes!
The staircase totters, the walls shake; I see,
Thro' the parti-coloured glass of the jarring casement,
The flashes of a violent thunder-storm:
The floor upheaves; and, from the vaulted ceiling,
Lime-scales and dust, in drizzling showers, descend;
The strong-barred door opes, by miraculous power.—
What a terrific giant, yonder, stands
In Faust's old gown! I could fall on my knees
At his presence: what a most awful look!—
Shall I be off at once, or shall I stay?
Ah! now his eyes have fixed themselves upon me!

MEPHISTOPHELES (*nodding*).

Here, my old friend! come hither, Nicodemus!

SERVITOR.

Most venerated lord! that *is* my name.
Let us pray.—Our——

MEPHISTOPHELES.

——We will dispense with that.

SERVITOR.

How it rejoices me, that you should know me!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Mossy old gentleman! I know full well,
That, though so ripe in years, you're yet a student;

Digitized by Google

And also, that the learned study on,
Because—what other occupation have they?
Students build up card houses middling high,
Though the greatest genius never *quite* built up one.
Yet your master is indeed an ornament!
Who knows not the illustrious Doctor Wagner?
The foremost man amongst the learned world;
He is the bond that holdeth them together;
Daily, he addeth to the stores of wisdom;
All that thirst after knowledge form his audience;
Daily do students congregate around him;
He shines alone, in the professor's chair,
As a star of the first magnitude in heaven!
He wields St. Peter's keys, and keeps the entrance
Both to the higher and the lower gates.
He eclipses all; there's no one whose renown
Stands on a prouder or a firmer base.
Even the name of Faustus is unheard,
And he alone is eagerly sought after.

SERVITOR.

Your pardon, most respected sir, if I
Venture to offer the least contradiction:
Modest discretion is his modest forte.
In the unaccountable disappearance
Of that great man, he finds himself bewildered:
To his return, he looks for consolation.

Digitized by Google

The study—as in Doctor Faustus' days—
Remains untouched, awaiting its old master.
I dare not venture into it myself:
Oh! what a place to pass the starlight hours!—
The very walls appear to be alarmed;
Door-posts recede, and bolts are springing open,
Else, how could you have gained an entrance here?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

In what place is your master to be found?
Show me the way to it, or fetch him here.

SERVITOR.

Alas! his prohibition's so severe,
I know not if I dare to venture it.
For months together, he lives quite alone,
Absorbed, in following out some mighty project.
The best-dressed, noblest, and most learned folks,
When they get audience, find him like a coalman,
With smutty face and bleared eyes, from the flame
That he is stooping over constantly,
To the music yielded by the clattering tongs.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Ought he ever to refuse me access? I
Am the very man to hasten his success.

[*The Servitor departs: Mephistopheles sits himself gravely down.*

Digitized by Google

I've scarcely taken my station, ere I spy
A well-known guest of mine advancing hither;
But quite an altered person: I perceive
He possesses now the most audacious boldness.

BACCALAUREUS

(rushing noisily along the gallery).

Bars and barriers all unfasten!
Now there is some hope, at last, then,
That the living will not moulder,
As they have done from of old, here,
Festering through a living death,
Ere they lose their living breath.

These walled partings, old and crazy,
Well may make a man uneasy:
Down, at last, they're sure to thunder:
Then, God help whoever's under!
I'm fool-hardier than I find most,
But—the Devil take the hindmost.

What I ought to have learnt by this time!
Sad and anxious, in my pristine
State, I came here a mere urchin,
To go through years of fag and birching;
And here, my beloved beard
To its manly state I reared.

Digitized by Google

From old crusty books, they pride in,
What they know, from me, still hiding;
What they know, even, not believing;
Themselves, and me, of life bereaving.—
Zounds! yonder—in that same old study—
Sits that chiar'oscuro body.

The very same! 'tis quite astounding!
There he sits—the same old gown in;
Wrapped in the same rough fleecy mantle—
Whom I missed more than language can tell.
Then, he seemed profound and splendid,
Though not wholly comprehended:
Now I feel, nor awed, nor favoured.—
On, and hail the learned greybeard.

If not dipped in Lethe, Doctor—
Where bald-heads, crossing, often ducked are—
My old master, sage and prudent,
Will acknowledge his young student:
Grown past academic birches—
Those lights guiding boys' researches.
You 're here, the same man I called first on:
I'm here, but an altered person.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

It glads my heart to see you so enlightened:

Digitized by Google

I augured well of you, when first we met;
I saw, in the chrysalis, the brilliant butterfly.
In the combed ringlets, and the cherished down
On the upper lip, ye took a child-like pleasure.
All this seemed full of promise *a priori*.—
Have ye not suffered *a posteriori*?—
And now, I see you in long flowing hair,
Looking valiantly and resolutely round.

BACCALAUREUS.

My ancient Master! we're in the ancient study,
But pray, bethink thee of the altered times,
And spare ambiguous words: we've long since given
The go-by to mere plodders; and 'twas you
Initiated the young ingenuous novice.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

When one offers to the young, plain simple truths,
The callow beaks are no way pleased therewith.
But in the three succeeding years, when they
Feel strongly conscious of such, in themselves,
They forget the source from whence they were derived,
And exclaim: 'What a simpleton the master was!'

BACCALAUREUS.

A knave, more likely!—But which of our professors
Speaks the plain truth to us, before our face?
Each studies to exaggerate or modify.

Digitized by Google

MEPHISTOPHELES.

How anxious you were once, I well remember,
To enrol yourself where learning could be gained.
Since then, have many moons, and a few suns,
Enabled ye to cram with th' essence of knowledge.

BACCALAUREUS.

Essence of knowledge! 'tis mere froth and dust!
Of meaner birth, inferior to the mind!
Confess, that what one ever knows, through *that*,
Is not worth knowing—that 'tis wholly worthless.

MEPHISTOPHELES (*after a pause*).

Long ago, this, to me, was clear and obvious,
Therefore I'm now considered stale and foolish.

BACCALAUREUS.

How that rejoices me! I hear reason's voice:
You're the first greybeard that I e'er found rational.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

I seek for hidden stores of purest gold,
And hateful charcoal's all I bring to light.

BACCALAUREUS.

Fairly confess, now, your bald-pated skull
Is worth no more than that hollow one is, yonder.

MEPHISTOPHELES (*good-naturedly*).

You're not aware of your ill manners, friend.

BACCALAUREUS.

To be courteous means—in German—to dissemble.

Digitized by Google

MEPHISTOPHELES,

(his chair being on rollers, and hitherto near the proscenium: he pushes it towards the pit).

Here am I, deprived both of light and air,
So 'tis well that I can turn to you for aid.

BACCALAUREUS.

I call evasive mean delays, arrogance:
Man's to be something, when he is no more.
The life of man existeth in the blood,
And when doth that flow as it flows in youthhood?
He, whose young blood in vigorous health is pulsing,
A life divine, from life itself, procures;
Then, one's impelled to stirring action; then,
Deeds are performed; and though the feeble fall,
The strong, with energy, pursue their course.
At any rate, we've conquered half the world;
And what have you been doing, the meantime?
Vegetating, pondering, dreaming, fluctuating
From one visionary project to another.
Surely, old age is as an ague shiver,
Amidst the frost of fanciful distress:
And, hath a person o'erpassed thirty years,
Why then, he may be reckoned as if dead;
Happiest whom death strikes soonest, after that.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

The Devil hath nought further here to say.

Digitized by Google

BACCALAUREUS.

No devil dares to be, if I so will it.

MEPHISTOPHELES (*aside*).

The Devil will trip thee up next time, however.

BACCALAUREUS.

Oh, high vocation of inspiring youth:
To clothe the ideal with the robes of truth!
The world was not, until I bade it be;
I wheeled the glorious sun up from the sea,
To brighten all with joyousness and glee;
Lo, beauty, as a mantle, decks the earth!
I called its verdure and its blossoms forth;
The moon, I balanced in the vault of night,
And girded her with lustre exquisite,
And bade her wax and wane amidst the sky;
'Twas at my beck the stars first looked in splendour
from on high.
'Twas I threw down your conventional boundaries,
And taught you clannish notions to despise.
I sweep on, as the spirit dictates, free,
And move, by that inner light, rejoicingly—
Speeding with rapture o'er the illumined track,
Brightness before me, darkness at my back.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

In thy original untamed spirit, soar!—
How knowledge might that spirit darken o'er:

Digitized by Google

What folly, or what sense is, who can tell
That hath not known man's former doings well?
And yet from this no injury can arise—
Pass a few suns, and all is otherwise:
The must, though vapid, frothy, void of strength,
May yield, however, genuine wine, at length.

[*To the young people in the pit: who do not applaud.*

Good children! you may go: I find my speech
Doth not attract you—'tis beyond your reach.
But remember, that the Devil's old; and you,
To comprehend him, should be aged too.

THE LABORATORY,

In the fashion of the middle ages:—a multiplicity of complex unwieldy apparatus, for little fantastical purposes.

WAGNER (*at the fire-place*).

THE clock is pealing forth the awful hour;
The wainscotted walls are shuddering at the sound:
The throbbing expectation, the uncertainty,

Digitized by Google

No longer can endure. Even now, the darkness,
Self-kindling, brightens; even now, behold,
The central part is gleaming like live coal;
Even now, like lightning, doth the vivid spark
Dart forth its flashing rays though the obscurity:
Pure, and intensely white, the light appears!
Oh, that this time, at least, I may not fail!——
Good God! what rattling can that be, at the door?

MEPHISTOPHELES (*entering*).

All hail!—Do things proceed auspiciously?

WAGNER (*in a troubled manner*).

Right welcome! as his task is, to the student.

[*Whispering.*]

But breathe not—place a seal upon your lips—
A mighty work is drawing near completion.

MEPHISTOPHELES (*whispering*).

What is the object?

WAGNER (*whispering*).

To make a human being.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

A human being!—What enamoured pair
Into this smoke-hole, can you have seduced?

WAGNER.

God save us!—As to the old mode of begetting,
We purpose showing 'tis superfluous trickery.
The genial powers,—that, impelling from within,

Digitized by Google

Reciprocally fix the tender life-point,
And fashion, from themselves, its form and nature,
With kindred, first, and then with foreign aliment,—
'Tis our object, for the future, to dispense with.
When animals have more delight in this,
'Tis fitting man, with his superior faculties,
Should, henceforth, boast a purer higher source.

[*Turning to the hearth.*]

It brightens!—look! Now, then, one may indulge
In actual hope; now, that we have, by mixture
Of many hundred divers sorts of matter—
By intimate mixture doth all come to pass—
The soft materials of human nature,
Compounded, and shut up in a retort,
Carefully luted—there to blend and coagulate.
Thus, in perfect stillness, is the work accomplished.

[*Turning again to the hearth.*]

It will become! it moves itself—gets brighter!
The conviction's stronger, momently is stronger!
What one values most, in Nature's great arcanum,
Is what we venture skilfully to try:
And what she hath hitherto allowed to organize,
We shall be now allowed to crystallize.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Who has lived long, has needs learnt many things;
And nothing wholly new can come to pass:

Digitized by Google

I have already, in my former wanderings,
Seen specimens of crystallized human beings.

WAGNER,

(*hitherto always watching the phial attentively*).

It rises, shines, accumulates itself:
In a twinkling, it is done! A mighty purpose
Is obvious, in the startlingly loud commencement.
Ah! we shall smile at future changes yet.
Thus, shall superior brains be made to think;
And be enabled to make future thinkers.

[*Takes the phial in his hand, to admire it.*

How vigorously the charming glass resounds:
It thickens, clears: it *must* become existence!
Lo, now a well-formed mannikin's produced!
What could we wish, what would the world have more?
The mystery, now, is open to broad day.—
Give these sounds due attention; they become
The voice—the language—of intelligence.

HOMUNCULUS (*in the phial, addressing Wagner*).

Well, my dear dad! What think you? 'tis no joke!
Come, press me to thy heart with true affection!
But not too ardently, lest the glass be broken.
This is the peculiarity of the thing:
Naturally, the entire universe
Is scarce sufficient for the spiritual—
It requireth boundless space to rush amidst.

Digitized by Google

[*To Mephistopheles.*]

Oh, sir uncle! art thou here, thou rogue,
Just at the nick of time? I give thee thanks.
A propitious star it was, that led thee hither.
Whilst I exist, I, also, must be active:
I would apply myself, at once, to duty,
And your skill will point out the shortest path.

WAGNER.

One word, I pray thee! I have hitherto
Felt quite ashamed of my own ignorance:
Both old and young so pester me with problems
That I cannot resolve. For instance, now,
It never yet could clearly be explained,
Or comprehended, how the soul and body
Are so exquisitely fitted to each other,
So intimately and so firmly joined,
As if they never more were meant to part;
Yet, daily, growing more averse to each other.
Likewise——

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Hold! I'd rather know, how 'tis
That men and women fit so very badly?
You've never yet, my friend, this problem solved.—
Set him to work to clear this for you, first.

HOMUNCULUS.

What's to be done there?—

Digitized by Google

MEPHISTOPHELES (*pointing to a side-door*).

——There, display thy skill.

WAGNER (*still looking at the phial*).

Truly, thou art a most delightful boy!

[*The side-door opens, and discovers Faust stretched on the couch.*

HOMUNCULUS (*astonished*).

Oh, wonder!—

[*The phial slips from Wagner's hand, and floats over, and illuminates Faust.*

With the beautiful surrounded!—
An azure lake by verdant groves is bounded;
And, on the green slope, maids unrobing see,
Of surpassing loveliness and symmetry;
Ah, maddening charms!—augmenting momently.
Now one distinguished by her radiant charms,
Who, or from gods or godlike heroes, hath
Descent—that a god might well clasp in his arms—
Dips her white foot in that transparent bath;
Now that bright form, glowing with life, she laves
In the cool yielding crystal of the waves.
But lo! the rustle of swift-moving wings!
The sough, the splash, the stir of gentle play,
Away, each frightened beauty promptly springs,
Serenely pure, their queen alone doth stay,
And sees, with feminine joy, devoid of shame,

Digitized by Google

The princely swan, importunate and tame,
Do homage with a practised courtier's grace:
A sudden vapour, now, doth shroud the place,
And closely woven flowers form a screen
Round that exciting and most lovely scene.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

What, what? Thou'st not told all that thou dost see:
Though so little, thou'st a mighty phantasie.
I see nought——

HOMUNCULUS.

I believe thee. From the North,
'Mongst its old chilly mists, thou wert brought forth;
How could thy sight be purged, 'midst feudal gloom,
And priestcraft's rights? In darkness thou'rt at home.
[*looking round.*
Swans, woodlands, fountains, naked loveliness!
Such was his vision of foreboding bliss;
How will he bear, *now*, to be thus immured?
It could scarce, by *my* plastic *spirit*, be endured.
So, forth with him at once, nor tarry more here.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

The adventure chimes in with my humour, quite.

HOMUNCULUS.

Lead the maiden to the dance; to the strife, the warrior.
And thus, all may be soon disposed aright.
Even now, the thought flashes across my mind—

Digitized by Google

This is the classical Walpurgis night;
The best occasion we could ever find
To place him in his element—let's try't.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Aught like it never yet hath met my eyes.

HOMUNCULUS.

How will it greet your ears, too, with surprise!
Amongst romantic sprites your knowledge lies;
A real spirit—even the classical—
You cannot have a notion of, at all.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

But how are we to get there? I acknowledge
My aversion, now, for every ancient college.

HOMUNCULUS.

North-westerly, Satan, is thy paradise;
But south-easterly, at present, let us steer—
Where that great plain, in verdant beauty, lies,
Through which the Peneus winds, serene and clear;
Where many a devious bend its waters take,
And scoop out many a lovely mimic lake;
Here fringed with bushes, there o'erarched by trees,
That doubled in the glassy wave one sees;
And, towards the wide-spread valley's narrowing gorge,
Lies the Pharsalus above, and that aneath the surge.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Alas!—away! and thus revive once more,

Digitized by Google

The tyranny and slavery of yore,
So vexing, that so long a time I bore?
Again, encountering us in front, to find,
What we so recently have left behind?
No one considers: flank these as he will,
Asmodeus is behind, to plague him still.
They call it Freedom's cause, and Freedom's right,
Serf against serf it is, when viewed aright.

HOMUNCULUS.

Leave those refractory beings, men, I pray,
Each must defend himself, as best he may;
From childhood on to manhood, all is strife.
But how is this dreamer to be roused to life;
Hast thou the means to do it at once, I ask?
If thou darest not, then leave to me the task.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

I might try many of the Brocken tricks,
But they won't unbar the gates of heathenish Greeks.
Their devilry had never much worth aught,
But the free senses' play made folks distraught;
By brighter sins it seduced the human breast;
And ours look darker, tried by such a test.
What's to be done?

HOMUNCULUS.

Thou'rt neither dull nor weak:
And when I of Thessalian witches speak——

Digitized by Google

MEPHISTOPHELES (*eagerly*).

Thessalian witches! Well! that *is* all right;
After them, have I a long time enquired.
Though to abide with them, night after night,
Is a thing, probably, not to be desired;
Yet let us prove them, let's commence the chase.

HOMUNCULUS.

The mantle's here, and you have but to place
Its folds around your knight; and, with the flap,
As heretofore, your worthy self to wrap,
And both will be borne by it, with ease and speed;
Whilst I, before you, with the light, proceed.

WAGNER (*anxiously*).

And I?

HOMUNCULUS.

Nay, nay now—you, papa, indeed!
You must remain, or things will be neglected.
Think of old parchments yet to be inspected—
Of their various errors, yet to be detected;
Of the elements of life to be collected;
With due regard to rules let this be done,
And join them circumspectly, one by one.
You would not place the WHAT before the WHY?
A wandering fragment, through the world I go:
The external dot that finishes your i.
So your great object is attained, you know;

Digitized by Google

Such noble efforts fit reward must claim:
A long and healthful life, rank, riches, fame,
Knowledge and Virtue, too, perchance.—Farewell!

WAGNER.

Ah! the word sounds in my ear like a passing knell.
I ne'er shall see thee more—I know that well.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Now, then, we're off!—for the Peneus! ho!
Nuncle must not be rated too low.
Ad spectatores.]
We shall fix at last: but now, you must know,
To furnish creations for you, we go.

CLASSICAL WALPURGIS NIGHT.

THE PHARSALIAN PLAINS.

Darkness.

ERICTHO.

Tonight, as oft before, from the shuddering firmament,
Come I, Erictho—I, the dread, the gloomy, forth;
But far less dreadful than the hated poets make me,

Digitized by Google

In their abounding calumnies:—never found wanting
In abuse or praise, are they! Lo! far down the vale
That I now o'erlook, appears, from yon grey waving tent,
The near approaching shape of the care-worn grey-robed night.
How oft before, of himself, the repetition!
In the Eternity eternally repeated.
There's none not envying the empire of another;
There's none not desiring, by vigour, to obtain it,
And vigorously rule. Those who wist not themselves to govern
Are prompt to make others' wills, to their own proud minds, conformable.
But here, an enduring lesson, through fierce strife, was taught:
Where mighty power, by mightier power, was opposed,
Tearing the kindlier myriad-flowered wreath of Freedom,
The victor, round his head, the inflexible laurel bound.
Here dawned the splendid day of that ambitious chief:
Eloquent, keen-eyed, cheerful, self-recording Cæsar!
The world remembers yet the greatness he achieved.
Watch-fires shoot forth their blood-red flames o'er the breezy plain;
By the wonder-blaze allured, traditional legions gather;

Digitized by Google

Around the capricious fires, sport or repose
Contentedly, the fabled forms of the olden time.—
Uplifting her bright but unfinished disk, the moon,
Over all, diffuses her mild mellowing lustre;
Blue burn the fires, the illusive grey tent vanishes.
But lo! what unlooked-for meteor o'er me glides?
It shines, it illuminates—a corporeal ball!
I discern life. To aught having life, my presence
Is baleful; and causes me uncompensated toil.—
'Tis descending. I will considerately withdraw.

[*Withdraws herself.*

[*Above the opening air.*]

HOMUNCULUS.

The floating sphere again survey:
Hills and valleys, peering through
Flame and phantom-robing grey,
Dim and ghost-like, meet the view.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Through the gloom, I'm looking forth
On rubbish, horror, shapes of wonder,
As through that window of the north:
Am I housed as I was yonder?

HOMUNCULUS.

Lo! where yon gigantic form
Stalks with widening stride.

Digitized by Google

MEPHISTOPHELES.

'Tis because she feels alarm
At the dashing way we stride.

HOMUNCULUS.

Thou stridest wearily! Alight,
And rouse to life again,
Thy knight, because he dared the flight
To where the fabulous reign.

FAUST,

(*perceiving himself to be on the ground*).

Where are we?

HOMUNCULUS.

Can't pretend to say,
May, perhaps, find out, if we enquire.
But prithee haste, ere dawns the day,
And trace your route from fire to fire:
He, who hath dared to explore the way
To the *Mothers*, hath nought more to acquire.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

And you perceive that I am also here;
Though, that it will advance, is by no means clear,
Our health or our salvation. Let each steer
His own course, as it lists him, through the fires,
And seek adventure till he fairly tires;
Then let us meet again for consultation.
Soften the light, moderate the lamp's vibration.

Digitized by Google

HOMUNCULUS.

See how it sparkles! hark how it rings!

[*The glass sounds, and shines intensely.*

Onward, onward, to stranger things!

FAUST (*alone*).

Why, where can they be vanished, on the instant?
But what signifies the distant—
May not the shore, the beating waves, be there,
Like speeches framed i' the air?
Here, by a miracle, behold I stand
Amidst the Grecian land!
And an inspiring glow breathes from the ground,
That makes my spirit bound!
As I, the sleeper, vigour now inhale
From the warm classic gale,
An Antæus, I stand on the glorious earth,
That gave divine things birth.
The contradictory gathered here, I find;
But, first, my course I'll wind
Through yonder labyrinths of glowing flame,
And see what they contain. [*Exit.*

MEPHISTOPHELES (*exploring the whole*).

'Tis odd, as 'midst these piles of fire I roam,
I cannot find myself the least at home;
Nearly all naked; here and there, perhaps, one
With merely a slight shirt or chemise on:

Digitized by Google

The shameless sphinx, the bare-faced griffin, here is,
And what not else, with curls and wings and queer phiz;
And some, that there's no taking by surprise,
Studded all over with fierce glistening eyes.
I find the antique, still, in life hath place,
Though, certes, we're not fitted to embrace;
For that, one must some different sense discover;
And manifold modern notions must get over.
Glum sort of folks!
Won't relish jokes;
Must not teaze them,
Or displease them.
Being unasked, 'tis meet,
With due respect, to greet
The monsters.—Health and joy to ye!
Lady! a slave doth kiss your feet;
Greybeard! how is it, my old boy, wi'ye?

GRIFFIN (*snarling*).

Greybeard! greybeard! it is most ungracious
To greet one by such grim name, goblin grimaceous!
Such a grumbling, grunting, groaning, grubbing, gory,
Etymological, horrible, hootable, hoary
Name's unsuitable to us, we do assure thee.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

And yet—your reverences, not to gainsay—
Griffin's a title honoured by the grey.

Digitized by Google

GRIFFIN,

(*as before, and so throughout, in a snarling way*).

Natural notion! none but know their nearness:
Railed at not rarely, oftener praised as peerless;
Men may grasp after virgins, crowns, or gold:
But fortune with the griffins still doth hold.

ANTS (*of the colossal kind*).

Of gold ye speak, and we have much collected,
In rock rifts, and dark caverns hid from day;
But the Arimaspian people have detected,
And laughing, yonder, bear our stores away.

GRIFFIN.

We'll cause them to confess the accursed crime.

ARIMASPIAN.

But not on jubilee night, though.
And, by morn, 'twill be all brought quite through;
Hey, for this glorious, prosperous time!

MEPHISTOPHELES,

(*who has seated himself between the sphinxes*).

All smooth and sociable, thus far,
Because I take folks as they are.

SPHINX.

We breathe our spirit tones, and by you the tones embodied be,
That we may know more of you, tell us your name, strange oddity!

Digitized by Google

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Folks christen me by various names: I've hit on
The appropriate one (are there any here?) of Briton;
About the world they constantly are travelling,
Battle-fields tracing—classic sites unravelling—
Now a water-fall viewing—
Now sketching a ruin:
This were a fit bourne to their toils and schemes.
You were witnesses of all the various scenes
In the by-gone drama of antiquity:
Saw you any one, not unlike me,
Called Old Iniquity?

SPHINX.

Tell me how came man to be?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

That's a mystery to me.

SPHINX.

Perhaps, by the stars, thou canst read the will of Fate:
What, of the approaching hour, dost thou predicate?

MEPHISTOPHELES (*looking up*).

Star after star, to meet its doom,
Is shooting through the sky;
The outer and inner curves of the moon
Meet at two points, on high;
And I humbly venture to presume,
That snugly seated, am I

Digitized by Google

Between your two lion-skins.
I once in climbing hurt my shins,
Since which, I think riddles bad;
Though I sometimes make a charade.

SPHINX.

Speak plainly, then: even now thy words enigmas are;
For once, by a full confession, make thy bosom clear:
It is a needful thing to pious and profane.
An earthquake comes to make asceticism reign,
And Ceres' festivals are ordained to be just
The reverse: and both alike are pastime to great Zeus.

FIRST GRIFFIN (*snarling*).

That, I won't allow!

SECOND GRIFFIN (*vehemently snarling*).

What's that—how—how?

BOTH.

What nasty creature 'mongst us have we got?

MEPHISTOPHELES (*brutal*).

'Tis your opinion those sharp claws can scratch, I wot,
Better than your guest's nails: try if they can or not.

SPHINX (*soothingly*).

If decently behaved, thou mightst amongst us stay;
But it behoves thee, now, to take thyself away.
In thy own land thou mayst indulge thy low desires;
A base mind, if I err not, thy strange form inspires.

Digitized by Google

MEPHISTOPHELES.

That thy bust is beautiful's a very safe assertion,
But, for the rest—such bestial form is my aversion.

SPHINX. [see:

Our claws are healthy, sharp, and strong, as thou mayst
Thou falsifier! severe thy punishment may be.
Be off at once, then, with thy shrivelled horse's foot!
With such as thee to ally one's self would never suit.

SIRENS (*preluding above*).

MEPHISTOPHELES.

What may those winged beings mean,
That perch on the poplar trees beside the stream?

SPHINX.

Mark you not, how their sing-song hath subdued,
At once, the best conditioned to its mood?

SIRENS.

Ah, come hither! wherefore sitting
'Twixt those ugly wonder-things?
To delight thee, hither flitting,
We have sped on friendly wings;
In sweet tones, their fame befitting,
List, what each fair siren sings.

THE SPHINX (*mocking them in their melody*).

Ah! invite them to come hither,
Where they may be fairly seen:

Digitized by Google

Their hawk's claws are altogether
Hidden by the foliage green;
O, lend not your ear! for ever,
If you do, you're lost, I ween.

SIRENS.

Hate, away! Envy, begone!
The brightest joys beneath the sun,
All in ocean, all on earth,
Of serenest loveliest birth,
To collect's our pleasing duty,
For man, as his welcome booty.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

The strangest innovation, this is!
And, it seems to me, the *gist* is,
By the muscles of the throat,
To weave strains, that circling float
To bewilder folks, and make them doat;
But, on me, is lost the humming;
At my ears I feel it drumming,
But, despite its subtle art,
It cannot penetrate my heart.

SPHINXES.

About thy heart, don't brag with such grimace—
That shrivelled leather bag, matching thy ugly face.

FAUST (*stepping forward*).

Wonderful! in huge contraries, one sees,
There's strong attraction: I bode good from these.

Digitized by Google

But what first fixes my attention, thus?

[*Pointing to the Sphinx.*]

Before such being, once stood Œdipus;

[*Pointing to the Sirens.*]

With cords, Ulysses caused—dreading their guile—
Himself be-bound, ere he sailed past their isle;

[*Pointing to the gigantic Ants.*]

'Tis theirs all precious treasure to collect.

[*Pointing to the Griffins.*]

And theirs—the true and watchful—to protect.
But I, in search of a fairer form, press on—
A form, of which remembrance is so strong.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Elsewhere, thou hadst forsworn a chase like this;
Now, thou appear'st to hold it not amiss;
Thus 'tis, where man his sweetheart hopes to trace,
Monsters themselves are hailed with cordial grace.

FAUST (*to the Sphinxes*).

Ye woman-formed! where ye are dwelling;
Have any of you e'er seen Helen?

SPHINXES.

Our race descends not down to Helen's birth:
Hercules slew the last that breathed on earth.
From one, who *rides* this spirit-realm about—
From Chiron—thou might'st learn her whereabout.

SIRENS.

Thee, too, doth our sweet song fail

Digitized by Google

To turn aside?—Ulysses
Must, full oft, have told the tale,
How, sorely 'gainst his wishes,
They kept him bound, nor struck the sail.—
Oh, come, and share our kisses!
Oh, fly with us, o'er the ocean blue,
Where delights and honours wait for you.

SPHINX.

Be not, by such offers, wiled;
Be not to that isle beguiled,
Which, by being bound to the mast
Only, sage Ulysses passed:
My plain, honest counsel heed,
And to find great Chiron, speed;
Then, in what's promised, you'll succeed.

[*Faust withdraws himself.*

MEPHISTOPHELES (*peevishly*).

What forms rush by, on clanging wings,
So swift, I can't discern the things,
One after t'other hurrying on?
The keenest sportsman they'd wear down.

SPHINX.

Like the storm, like the winter winds, they sweep
O'er the land, and o'er the deep,
That vast, scarce-reached circuit, round,
Which Alcides' pillars bound.

Digitized by Google

'Tis the Stymphalides, swiftest far
Of all whose broad vans cleave the air.
With vulture beaks, and goose's feet,
Thee, with well-meant caws, they greet.
Old relationship we trace:
We'd receive, with joy, that race.

MEPHISTOPHELES (*as if alarmed*).

Now, other strange things hissing make!

SPHINX.

Start not:—of the Lernæan snake
'Tis believed to be the head,
From the body severed.—
But why turn so impatiently?
Oh! yon chorus you descry!
Go, greet the charming company.
They're the Lamians—tempting creatures!
With bold fronts, and handsome features:
Round the satyrs how they cling!
There, a buck's-foot's every thing.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Shall I find you here again?
In this place will ye remain?

SPHINX.

Aye! join the unsubstantial throng.
From Egypt we, accustomed long
Unto age-enduring thrones.

Digitized by Google

Mindful of our wonted homes,
'Midst the stir, that earth defaces,
We maintain our wonted places.
We, couched beside the pyramids
(Empire's blood-seats they),
Calmly, with unwinking lids,
Now war, now peace, survey,
As they come and go, yet leave no traces,
No scars, on our unwrinkled faces.

PENEUS,

Surrounded by Water Nymphs.

PENEUS.

Softly breathe, ye tufted rushes;
Waving sedges, gently sigh;
Murmur, silvery willow bushes;
Aspens, lisp ye tremblingly!
Soothe my interrupted dream!
Through a fearful noise I waken;
Mystic tremblings shake the stream,
And repose from me have taken.

FAUST (*advancing to the river*).

If my ears do not deceive,
Certainly, I must believe

Digitized by Google

That, behind the foliage green
Of this thickly-woven screen,
A human-voice-resembling tone
Breathes from the stream that's gliding on.
The wave, a prattler seems to be,
Like the air—a sportive deity.

NYMPHS (*to Faust*).

We waft thee our blessing:
Thy worn limbs compose;
In the coolness refreshing
Thou seekest repose—
The repose that doth ever
Away from thee flee.
Lo, we purl; lo, we murmur;
Lo, we whisper to thee.

FAUST.

Ye fix, ye fascinate, my aching sight,
Transcendent beauties! models of delight!
I surely am awake? Oh, still! oh, still
Your graceful play continue! Oh, ye fill
My gloomy breast with rapture; as I gaze,
I am transfixt with wonder and amaze.
Is't a revived remembrance? is't a vision?
Once, and but once, I knew such bliss Elysian.
Whispering repose to the fringed banks around,
The water glides on with a purling sound;

Digitized by Google

And countless springs their sparkling tribute take,
From the surrounding shores, to the pure lake,
That forms a bath, capacious and serene,
Where young and exquisite maiden forms are seen
Reflected in that pure and healthful mirror.
Now they wade timidly, with mimic terror;
Lo! now they romp with social glee, now dive,
And now, tumultuously, they shriek and strive.
The eyes might still unsating pleasure find,
But long enough my sense hath been confined;
Still deeper, further, onward, strives the mind.
Again, in search of my resplendent queen,
I wander thorough the luxuriant scene,
And sharply glance behind each leafy screen,
That may conceal her 'neath its foliage green.—

Wonderful!—swans majestically glide,
From forth the thickets, o'er the glassy tide:
Calmly they float, loving and sociable,
Yet haughty and self-satisfied, withal;
Hither and thither their beaked heads conveying,
The lithe neck's graceful motion thus displaying.—
Lo! one, before the rest, swiftly advances,
With ruffled plumes, and proudly round him glances;
Wave after undulating wave he's driving,
'Till, at the maiden's sacred bath arriving.—

Digitized by Google

Meantime, the others calmly to and fro,
With unruffed plumage, still serenely go,
Whilst the magnificent combat's fought and won,
Which the avoiding maidens promptly shun:
Mindful no longer of their sportive duties,
Safe shelter, only, seek the timid beauties.

NYMPH.

Sisters, lay your ear
To the shore's green slope:
Horses' hoofs draw near.
Ah! to know, might we hope,
What swift news they bear!

FAUST.

Seems to me, that the earth is resounding,
As if a swift steed were o'er it bounding.
What a splendid countenance,
Yonder, meets my searching glance!
A matchless wonder doth advance.
A spirited rider doth hitherward speed;
Hitherward, rushes a dazzling white steed.—
If I err not, the being's at once to me known:
'Tis Phillyra's far-famed and god-allied son!—
Stop, Chiron! stop! I have somewhat to say——

CHIRON.

What's the matter? what is't?

FAUST.

O restrain thy speed! stay!

Digitized by Google

CHIRON.

I pause not.

FAUST.

O take me on with thee, I pray!

CHIRON.

What is't thou wantest? whither wouldst thou go?—
Ascend, and I can learn as on we ride.
We're standing on the river's bank; and, lo,
I am prepared to bear thee through the tide.

FAUST (*seating himself*).

Great pedagogue! where'er thou list'st, proceed.—
Thou'lt live for ever in my grateful thoughts,
Who nurtured to renown that heroic breed,
The sacred band of noble Argonauts.

CHIRON.

Pray you, from reminiscences refrain:
Pallas, herself, no honour gained as Mentor;
As if they had not been advanced, again
Upon their old perverted course they venture.

FAUST.

O great physician! to whom's known the use
Of every plant in the savage wilderness:
Thou dost, by thy noble art, from their balmy juice,
Wound-pangs alleviate, dire disease repress.

CHIRON.

A wounded hero, ever prompt to aid,
I came, and tortures, at my presence, ceased;

Digitized by Google

But long my healing art aside I've laid:
I leave it to the herb-woman and priest.

FAUST.

Ah! thine is genuine greatness, mighty friend,
And praises are distasteful to thine ear;
For their own worth's sake, thy blest labours tend
To benefit, to enlighten, and to cheer.

CHIRON.

Seemeth to me, the flatterer's art thou'dst fain
Display,—that in the halls where princes reign
To full perfection, only, can attain.

FAUST.

Thou didst, in thy time, behold
The noblest of those earnest, bold,
Aspiring demigods, whose aim
Was to crowd life with deeds of fame:
Whom dost thou, as the foremost, hold,
Cast in such heroic mould?

CHIRON.

In the sacred Argonautic band,
Each hero daring deeds achieved,
As his own spirit willed, with his own right hand,
And at a brother's failure grieved.
Triumphant, aye, were the Dioscuri,
When the day was with youth and beauty.
Firm in resolve, in action, prompt to confer
Blessings, was the Boreädes' character.

Digitized by Google

Profound to plan, and eloquent to declare,
Was the lordly Jason—favourite of the fair.
Refinement ever tempering its fire,
Orpheus struck the all-o'ermastering lyre.
The keen-eyed Lynceus safely o'er the tide,
Through reefs and shoals, the sacred bark did guide;
Peril's associate, 'till she e'en grew weary
Of a companion so alert and chary:
His part was, active skill to use;
To wonder and to praise, his crew's.

FAUST.

But thou dost not mention Hercules.

CHIRON.

Ah! do not raise my longing phantasies!—
Nor ever did Apollo bless my eyes.
Of Hermes, worshipped as a god by all,
As there he stood, the memory I recall;
And *his* fine form, too, of imperial birth,
Unto his elder brother still submiss,
And unto her, whose surpassing loveliness
Excelled aught else upon the dædal earth.

FAUST.

He, also, is the sculptor's pride and boast.—
Of the finest manly form that hath e'er the vision crossed
Now having spoken—of the loveliest fair,
I pray thee, next, thy sentiments declare.

Digitized by Google

CHIRON.

What! female beauty! who may dare to hope,
In fitting language with such theme to cope?
Too oft, in mere forms, it hath been sought to bind
The ethereal essence, subtle and refined.
But of one woman let me breathe the name:
Consummate Helen! and I proudly claim,
Where thou sitt'st, to have borne that matchless fair.

FAUST.

Where I?—As 'twas, I felt o'er excited!—Where
I sit, didst thou say?—Oh, the omen, rare,
And fortunate!

CHIRON.

She grasped my mane,
As thou dost.

FAUST.

Oh, rapture! oh, explain!
She's my sole desire—sole object of my prayer!
Oh, where didst thou convey her? when, how, where?

CHIRON.

That question bears the easiest solution:
'Twas when the Dioscuri had released
Their sister from the robber chief's pollution;
Who—unused to defeat—when surprise had ceased,
Took courage, and were close upon their rear,
As Eleusis bog the lovely three drew near.

Digitized by Google

The brothers waded; I swam, dashing through.—
'Twas there: she sprang on me there, with sweet grace, too,
Serenely riding, conscious of her charms;
She smoothed my wet mane fondly, on our flight.
Ah! how the thought, even now, my spirit warms,
Of the young, the smiling, the old world's delight!

FAUST.

In her tenth year!—

CHIRON.

That scenteth of philology:
She would thee—no less than she did me—have swayed.
Fetterless, and all-harmonizing, is mythology:
By the gifted bard, as he saw her, she's displayed;
Fresh beauties seemed about to burst forth, ever,
Exciting as an opening rose, one never
Thought of her age, thought of her exquisite form,
As having reached, of its perfected state, the bourne.
The young, as they gazed, maddened with wild desire;
The old, as they praised, felt the glow of their youthful fire.
Never is poesy manacled by time:
Immortal are the ideal's charms divine.

FAUST.

Thou saw'st her long since—I, today: the vision
Hath vexed my maddening soul with joys Elysian—

Digitized by Google

Hath roused o'ermastering wishes in my breast:
I may not, cannot, live by her unblest!—
And may I not, by earnestly aspiring,
Call to renewed life that consummate form,
Ranked with the gods, and sacred awe inspiring,
Yet exciting passionate feelings, soft and warm?

CHIRON.

Thou unknown man! as men are, thou'rt excited;
And yet, thou art half crazy for a ghost;
Thou'rt in good luck, on me to have alighted;
For a few moments only, at the most,
In the year, by me is Manto's threshold crossed:
Æsculapius' child, who breathes her silent prayer,
That her sire, at length, to his renown, may clear,
From that atrocious spectacle, her mind.
She's the loveliest of the sybils; ever kind,
Ever persuasive, mild, beneficent;
Doubt not she'll yield to thee a glad assent,
And cause those fiery longings to be healed,
By potent medicine, from rare plants distilled.

FAUST.

Healed would I not be: powerful, now, my mind,
I should descend, then, to the baser kind.

CHIRON.

Health's sacred fountain thou shouldst never slight.—
Lo, we have reached the very spot: alight.

Digitized by Google

FAUST.

Ho! whither hast thou, from the land,
Brought me, thorough waves and sand?

CHIRON.

Here's the spot, where haughty Rome
And Greece in combat strove;
Peneus on their left did foam,
On their right, soared the hill of Jove.
The monarch fled, the burgher won.
Seest thou not, by the moonlight, where
Her everlasting temple standeth near?

MANTO,

(*within, in a trance*).

Of sacred horse-hoof,
Sounds I hear—
Unerring proof
A demigod's near.

CHIRON.

All's right!
But her eyes closed, quite!

MANTO (*awaking*).

Right welcome! but I see thou wilt not stay.

CHIRON.

Standeth thy temple firmly still, I pray?

MANTO.

Wanderest thou, unweariedly, as of yore?

Digitized by Google

CHIRON.

Thou dwell'st by peace surrounded, evermore:
I in a circle gallop, as before.

MANTO.

I stay, but time moves round me.—Who is this?

CHIRON.

The reviled night spouted forth, I brought him hither.
Helen, his vicious mind haunts; Helen 'tis
That he would seek, but knows not how, or whither.

MANTO.

He demands the impossible, which I admire.

[*Chiron is already at a distance.*

To Persephone's pursue the gloomy road.
Patiently watch at high Olympus' foot,
For the forbidden mystical salute.
I, once, the secret pass to Orpheus showed:
Make better use of 't than did he—
On! on! courageously. [*She sinks.*

ANCIENT SITE OF PENEUS.

SIRENS.

In Peneus plunge, splash, swim!
Thorough mud and gravel, grope

Digitized by Google

To a hag unblessed by hope!
What a strange and tasteless whim!
Besides, this turbid element
Never for delight was meant!
Swiftly, o'er the purple main,
Follow in our brighter train,
To where, in turn, all pleasures reign.

[*Earthquake.*]

But lo! the foaming river turns back,
And flows no more in its wonted track.
How the waves are tossed up! how heaves the earth!
From its green surface, how smoke bursts forth!
What avails to us this wonder-birth?
Let's be off at once! one and all! come!
Stranger! joyfully, with us, away,
To where, from serene skies, the sunbeams play,
Brightening our happy, our sea-girt home,
Spangling the fountains, that jet forth their spray
Over verdant slopes pranked with flowers;
To where we weave the luxuriant bowers,
O'er whose rich canopies Luna strews,
In the calm vigour-restoring night—
Distilled through holy, twice-tempered light—
Her consecrated dews.
Life frolics there,
Free as the air;

Digitized by Google

Here, the shuddering earth
Gasps at the birth
Of tumult and care.
Thither let all who are wise repair:
Terrors close round us here!

SEISMOS (*in the depths, rattling and bellowing*).

Now, brave shoulders, one more shake!
One heave more! and then, we'll break
Earth's unconscious crust, and make
Her boldest monsters quake!

SPHINXES.

What strange tremulation, under!
Hark! what claps of hateful thunder!
How the yawning plain doth sunder!
Wavering forward, reeling back,
How all round doth heave and crack!
What intolerable riot
Thus disturbs our wonted quiet?
But we will not quit our ground,
Though all hell break loose around.
Lo! a wondrous pillared dome
Upheaves itself from earth's dark womb!
The very same yon wrinkled hag,
Once so young and fair,
On Delos' sea-emerging crag,
Unto Love did rear.

Digitized by Google

With curving back, with arms extending,
Lo! some huge Atlas, heaving, rending,
With fearful shocks,
Greensward and rocks!
Tearing away,
Through sand and clay,
With giant strength, that wearies never,
Across the smooth plain's verdant cover,
A wide rent doth the monster sever!
But, united firm and long,
Colossal caryatides
Here present a barrier strong;
Here entrenched we sit at ease,
Though buried to the bust;
Further, it nor can nor must
To the sphinxes' station come.

SEISMOS.

This have I meditated long:
'Tis useless patience to prolong.
Had I not shook and tossed it well,
How could this world have been so fair?
How could yon mountains upward swell,
And 'midst heaven's blue their proud forms rear,
With broidered green robes, coifs of snow—
A picturesque and glorious show—
Had I not heaved them from below?

Digitized by Google

To Night and Chaos both, who were
My great ancestors, I bear
Strong resemblance. Many a day,
With my Titan friends at play,
  Amongst our wild exploits,
  For fun, at pitch and toss, a
  Myriad times, for quoits,
  I've Pelion used, and Ossa.
In strength and fervour, who surpass us?
Yonder mountain—old Parnassus,
With its double-pointed cap—
On my head I often clap,
When I lay down to take a nap;
Old Parnassus, in whose hollow
Dwelt the Muses and Apollo.
Yon Olympus, too, I hove
Aloft, to be the throne of Jove.
Now, with enormous toil and strife,
Up from the dread abyss I rise;
And call on the spirit-crowded skies
For newer and more joyous life.

SPHINXES.

Woods are spreading wide and high,
Rocks on pressing rocks close round;
But, gazing imperturbably,
We maintain our wonted ground.

Digitized by Google

The sphinxes never will retreat
From their old and sacred seat.
Never saw we those proud mountains
Other than we now behold,
With their forests and their fountains:
Doubtless, they're extremely old.

GRIFFIN.

Gold in spangles, gold in leaves,
In the fissures, one perceives.
What! leave such treasures unexplored!
Away, and add them to our hoard.

CHORUS OF ANTS.

Earth's surface, above,
How the giants shove,
The splay-footed on,
One by one!
Those crumbling domes,
Our toil-built homes,
Ye needs must be scattering—
Ye restless, chattering
Swarms, that ye are!
From whence, come ye here?
Lo, the torn hills unfold
Hoards of glittering gold!

GRIFFIN.

The treasure's safety to ensure,
Here are bolts the most secure.

Digitized by Google

Hither, hither! Gold—gold—gold!
We stretch our fangs to grasp and hold.

PIGMIES.

We are now to a real place advanced,
Without even knowing how it has chanced.
What does it signify, whence we come?
The question's useless—we've gained a home:
'Midst life's most fertile and cheerful seats,
Or, where'er there's a rift
In some rocky cliff,
The pigmies are sure to find snug retreats.
A he-dwarf and she-dwarf—a notable pair,
Which was the wiser we may not declare—
Once on a time, in Paradise were.
And we'll still of the earth make the best we may;
And, gratefully blessing our stars, we'll say:
Whether we turn to the west or the east,
She spreads for us still an ample feast.

DACTYL.

One night has brought forth
This pigmy batch:
The meanest on earth
Is for them a match.

THE ELDEST PIGMY.

Haste, clear the ground—
The city found!
Speed the strong works round!

Digitized by Google

Nor ever cease,
Whilst yet 'tis peace,
Your toils to urge;
Erect the forge;
At once begin
The useful din!
Armour and arms,
Against alarms,
To provide the army.
Join the swarm, ye
Imps, and sweat, all,
To raise the metal!
You dactyls, that smaller
Are, and more numerous,
Littered ye all are,
Wood to fell for us;
And, in vaulted piles,
To build it, whilst
Ye convert the whole,
By a secret fire,
Into the coal
That we require.

GENERALISSIMUS.

Bend the bow!
To the fish-pond go;
Shoot me each heron,

Digitized by Google

Proud and stately,
Stalking thereon
So sedately.
Steal close, and fell
Their ranks, pell mell,
That helm and plume
We may assume.

IMPS AND DACTYLS.

Whom, to save, can we urge?
Iron we produce:
Tough chains they forge.
But, to tear loose
The flexible gyves
Is of no use,
'Till the time arrives.

THE CRANES OF IBYCUS.

Murder-shrieks, and funeral wailing!
Agonized fluttering, wings assailing!
Groans o'er heavier groans prevailing!
Impious mockery and railing!
Multitudes already dead, and
The waters with their blood all reddened!
Lo, the herons' plumes are the prize
Of those vile deformities—
Stuck up, already, in the caps
Of these bandy-legged chaps.

Digitized by Google

Our armies' aid, whene'er ye please—
Line-ranged wanderers of the seas—
Ye may claim: revenge, we swear,
For this unprovoked affair,
Unto relatives so near;
Eternal war, with this vile herd,
We wage: let strength nor blood be spared.

[*They disperse, with dismal croaking, in the air.*

MEPHISTOPHELES (*on the plain*).

How to manage northern witches, I well know;
But 'midst these strange geniuses it is not so.
The noble Blocksberg is the place to roam,
For there one feels so perfectly at home.
There, mother ILSE nodded on her STONE;
And HENRY waked to unblest joys thereon;
There the SNARLER snarled, when MISERY was so near:
But all that's done with, 'till the thousandth year.—
Who could tell, whether he doth stand or go,
Whether the surface may blow up or no?
I'm wandering through a pleasant vale; yet still,
Behind, upheaves a hill—is it a hill?
Already it ascends—or my spot sinks—
Sufficiently to bar me from my sphinx.
Still blazes many a fire, adown the vale,
So, to find adventures, yet, I shall not fail.—

Digitized by Google

Still, alluringly, dance those objects of desire
Before me—the juggling and lascivious choir.
But gently! where there are dainty things to catch,
One should consider which is best to snatch.

LAMIÆ,

(*Mephistopheles following them*).

Faster walking,
Yet ever behind;
To idle talking
Always inclined;
The ugly grinner!
'Tis such fun,
To lure the old sinner!
Who hobbles on,
O'er the ground, painfully:
Now he stumbles—see!
Now he's down,
As, our hindmost three,
He thought his own.

MEPHISTOPHELES (*remaining down*).

Accursed fate! vile architects of ruin!
Ever, from Adam down, deceivers found:
That man's not virtuous still, is all your doing;
And yet the infatuation holds its ground.
One knows they're not of earth—that vain the chase is—
That they've strange lithesome forms, and painted faces;

Digitized by Google

One knows that there is nothing real to clasp—
That they'd dissolve within one's eager grasp;
One's quite aware that all's a delirious trance:
Yet, whensoe'er they choose to pipe, we dance!

LAMIA.

Hold—he recovers, and the charm's not broke!
Lest he escape us, let fresh lures provoke.

MEPHISTOPHELES (*moving onward*).

But on, 'neath the spell's guidance, on!
A doubting, not a silly one:
Because, were there no witchery,
Who the devil would the Devil be?

LAMIÆ (*in their most attractive way*).

We surround this godlike hero!
Love will conquer—there's no fear, O!
He'll choose one, for his dear—his dear, O!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

In faith, by this uncertain gleam,
Handsome lasses ye all seem:
Tempting charms ye're all unfolding,
So I will not think of scolding.

EMPUSE (*pressing forward*).

Nor me either, would you?—fain
Would I make one of your train.

LAMIÆ.

So many in our circle throng,
That they spoil sport, and set all wrong.

Digitized by Google

EMPUSE

(*to Mephistopheles*).

Empuse, with the asses' feet,
He of the horse's hoof doth greet!
Noble cousin! the salutation,
Respond to, of thy near relation.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Here, as unknown, I think aloud,
And find near relatives amidst the crowd!
From an ancient book I must have learnt to spell, as
It seems descended, to the Hartz, from Hellas.

EMPUSE.

I easily discern what best will please:
I to many shapes transform myself with ease;
But, to honour you in an especial way,
I have put on the ass's head today.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

I see that these good folks themselves persuade,
That, betwixt greatness and an ass's head,
There's relationship; but, let what may come to pass,
I'll never own relationship to an ass.

LAMIÆ.

Avoid that nasty creature, who would scare
All that now seems beautiful and fair;
What was beautiful, in days of yore,
It makes approach to—nothing more.

Digitized by Google

MEPHISTOPHELES.

And those young female relatives,
So slender and so graceful?
Their rosy cheeks, my mind misgives,
May hide what's most distasteful.

LAMIÆ.

Yet, for all that, you'd better try:
There's amongst us great variety.
Select the best, and make up to her.—
What ails the eager scholar, pray?—
Thou art a miserable wooer!
So haughty and reserved—hey-dey!—
Now he joins us—mind your play:
By degrees let your masks be slipped,
And show him what ye are when stripped.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

I've seized the loveliest of the lot——
[*He embraces one.*
What a dry broomshank! Now another——
[*He seizes a second.*
What a face desire to smother!

LAMIA.

Dost thou merit better than thou'st got?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Can I secure the little one?——
A lizard, through my hands hath gone,

Digitized by Google

With wriggling smooth tail, like a snake!
And now, the lengthy one I take——
Lo! a Thyrsus staff I grapple,
With the head of a pine-apple.
What will this end in?—Hither, fat one;
Hither, my squabby, squashy, squat one!
What a price, in the East, they'd pay for *you*——
Lo, my puff-ball bursts in two!

LAMIÆ.

Asunder rushing, float and soar,
Witches' sons, around and o'er!
In swart groups, like the lightning, play!
A fear-inspiring, horrid ring!
Flitter mice, on noiseless wing!—
He gets too easily away.

MEPHISTOPHELES (*shaking himself*).

Absurd in the North, and here absurd—
Devil's spectres, here as there:
Tasteless, are both the common herd
And the poet; here, as every where,
'Tis mummery and false pretences—
Merely a wild dance of the senses.
A kind alluring form I grasp,
And lo! what makes me shudder, clasp;
Though had not the mummery so soon concluded,
I had been longer, pleasantly deluded.

[*Loses himself among the spectres.*

Digitized by Google

Where am I now?—what is the end of this?
Here was a plain path, now a dark abyss!
Now rubbish heaps around me lie,
And to get on, I vainly try;
I scramble up and down, in vain,
However shall I find my sphinx again?
On any mountain, such a noisy night,
I never passed; this new kind of witch flight—
This novel mode of riding through the air—
Would not fail to make the Blocksberg people stare.

OREAS,
(*from the natural rock*).

Ascend my mountain old,
That stands unchanged by time:
The rugged path, behold,
To Pindus' heights sublime.
I stood precisely so,
When Pompey o'er me fled;
Moreover, at the first cock's crow,
These shadowy forms have fled.
Oft, such dreams, I've seen rehearsed,
And as suddenly dispersed.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Honoured be thy reverend head,
By old oaks o'ershadowed!

Digitized by Google

Brightest moonlight may pervade,
Never, their impervious shade.
But, amidst the thicket, I
See a sober light draw nigh—
Truly, 'tis Homunculus!
Prithee, where art wandering thus?

HOMUNCULUS.

From place to place flitting,
I fain would begin;
The glass is nigh splitting,
From the ardour within,
So impatient and fretting.
Aught, I've hitherto seen,
I feared 'twas not fitting,
Alone, to get in.
Hush! prick up your ears:
I'm on the track
Of two philosophers;
Hold me not back.
I heard them call
Thus: Nature—Nature!
I might, after all,
Miss them, to wait here;
They *must* know, the fact is,
What best to advise,

Digitized by Google

From study and practice:
So I follow the wise.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

That thyself, I should say,
For thyself must do:
Philosophers may—
And right welcome, too—
Show what spirits are,
And where they're to be found,
Thereby, making clear
Man's merits profound,
And the depth of his science;
Nay they, even, may show—
If thou'lt place reliance—
A dozen quite new.
Of wisdom, thou never
Wilt compass a jot,
If, ever and ever,
Thou wanderest not.
But wouldst thou begin?
Begin! and select,
As thy own whim
May chance to direct.

HOMUNCULUS.

That's useful advice—
But are you not joking?

Digitized by Google

MEPHISTOPHELES.

You'll see in a trice—
What's spoken, is spoken.

ANAXAGORAS (*to Thales*).

Yieldeth to nothing, thy inflexible mind:
What further, to convince it, need be stated?

THALES.

Waves yield to every motion of the wind,
But start from repulsive rocks, as from things hated.

ANAXAGORAS.

The might of fire raised this proud rock from the plains.

THALES.

Prolific moisture breeds all, and sustains.

HOMUNCULUS (*between the two*).

Let me enlist on your side, pray:
I'd fain begin without delay.

ANAXAGORAS.

Hast thou, O Thales! ever, in one night,
Beheld, from mud, such a mountain heave in sight?

THALES.

By night, by day, no pause doth Nature know,
Ceaselessly circulates, her living flow;
Her power extendeth over great and small;
She moulds, moves, modifies, and nourishes all.

ANAXAGORAS.

But it was Pluto's furious fire that broke

Digitized by Google

Up through the level valley's ancient crust,
And, 'midst terrific sounds and wreathing smoke,
At once, amidst the skies, this mountain thrust.

THALES.

What further see we, than that broad, and bluff,
And steady, there it stands? and that's enough.
The vain gaze, theorize, and waste their time,
Whilst the patient are content its sides to climb.

ANAXAGORAS.

Suddenly rose the Myrmidonian hill;
And just as suddenly arose, I wot—
Amidst the rock rifts, on the plains, to dwell—
Pigmies and imps and dactyls, and what not.

[*To Homunculus.*]

Striving for the great, the unattainable,
In musing solitude didst ever dwell?
Know'st thou to govern thy own mind and heart?
Then, mightier than a crowned king thou art.

HOMUNCULUS.

What says my Thales?

THALES.

I may not advise:
With confined views, man doth petty deeds devise;
With grand, those petty deeds, to great, arise.
See, yonder, those black cranes, upon the wing,
Hovering over—menacing the king!

Digitized by Google

With pointed beaks and talons, down they swoop!
Fate's messengers, upon their prey they stoop.
A pigmy band, the heron tribes destroyed,
When nestling peacefully around their lake;
But every murderous arrow thus employed,
In near relations, deep revenge did wake.
Of what avail, their crests of the heron's plume?
Of what avail are helm and spear and shield?
Already, trembling, flying from the doom,
The hosts of imps and dactyls quit the field.

ANAXAGORAS,

(*after a solemn pause*).

The subterraneous, hitherto, I've praised:
Now, for this deed, on high shall my voice be raised.—
Goddess! eternal and divine,
Unchanged by time,
By age unclaimed,
Triformed, and triply named:
Diana, Luna, Hecate, hear!
Thou that expand'st the mind and heart—
Tranquil-looking though thou art—
With hope and love and fear!
Thy whirling gulf of shade disclose!
I call on thee, amidst my people's woes!
The ancient power, thou knowest well,
Without or charm or spell.

Digitized by Google

(PAUSE.)

I pant to hear!
Doth my earnest prayer
With the course of Nature interfere?—
Enlarging, still enlarging, it comes on,
The goddess's full-orbed throne;
How it reddens in the darkness! how it glares!
With what terrific eyes she stares.—
No nearer, mighty orb! no nearer, come!
Land and ocean, thou dost doom:
Oh! the fearful omen!
By unhallowed incantations,
Ever, did Thessalian women,
From thy bright path, draw thee down?
And, with shrieks and lamentations,
Vexingly, thy form surround?—
Darker grows that borrowed shield!
It rends—what splendour is unveiled!
What a hissing, what a crashing,
A thunder-blast 's amidst them dashing!
Lo, I fall before thy throne—
Pardon, that I called thee down!

[*Throws himself on his face.*

THALES.

What he heard and saw, was neither heard nor seen
By us: I know not how this can have been—

Digitized by Google

I perceived nought, as he did. On this mount
We stand; the hours advance: as is her wont,
Luna, on her accustomed path, moves on,
Precisely in the way she hath ever done.

HOMUNCULUS.

Look yonder: look! near the pigmies' ground,
The mountain is pointed, that erst was round.
Lo, I perceive, with a monstrous bound,
A huge rock, from out the moon, leap down!
Without saying by your leave, it hath,
Friend and enemy, crushed to death.
Can I choose but own the creating might
That destroys, and constructs, in a single night,
Such giant masses, above and below,
Changing the aspect of Nature so?

THALES.

Peace! 'twas a mere crust opened and closed.—
See, amidst the confusion, unhoused,
How that ugly brood is scampering!
Bless thy stars that thou art not a king.
Now forth, to the happy ocean-feast:
They expect, they'll honour their wondrous guest.

[*Withdraw.*

MEPHISTOPHELES (*scrambling up the opposite side*).

Up steep rocky steps, among
Twisting roots of ancient oaks,

Digitized by Google

Tripping, slipping, stumbling on,
How the toilsome way one pokes!
When one's own dear Hartz one climbs,
Fragrant odour one doth get
From the stately resinous pines:
Next brimstone's, 'tis my favourite.
But here, travelling 'mongst the Greeks,
By such toilsome means as these,
The right track one vainly seeks:
One's puzzled to know where one is.—
One's puzzled, too, to ascertain
How they roast sinners—'tis no joke—
But I see nought to make a flame;
Nought, wherewith the fire to poke.

DRYAD.

Folks, as a knowing one, thy fame may puff,
In thy own land: here, thou'rt not sharp enough;
Thou shouldst not, here, have either thought or spoke
Of home; here, thou shouldst revere the sacred oak.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

What one loves, one most doth prize:
Our native home's our paradise.—
But say, what threefold form excites my wonder,
Shrouding behind the light that I see yonder?

DRYAD.

The Phorcydes! but onward to the spot,
And parley with them, if thou tremblest not.

Digitized by Google

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Why should I hesitate?—What do I discern?
Proud as I am, there's much, I find, to learn.
I am astonished! never saw I such!
They are much worse than mandrakes—very much!
When these triform personages one looks at,
One can't call one's-self her ugliest, at any rate,
If one *is* to be considered Sin's chief reprobate.
The portal of our hell, 'tis past supposing,
They'd ever be allowed to poke their nose in.
Here, rooted in the land of beauty, grows
What is enough to scare away repose.—
They stir; they seem to know there's some one near;
They whistle, chirp; like vampire-bats they appear.

PHORCYAD.

Sisters, yield to me the eye,
That, therewith, I may espy
Who doth near our temple venture.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Most Venerable! a distant relative
Requesteth leave to enter,
Your triple blessing to receive.
The eldest and most reverend divinities—
Rhæa and Ops—I've seen, with awe profound;
To the Fates, to Chaos—sister deities—
It was but yesterday I bowed me down;

Digitized by Google

But on your equals did I never gaze—
Silent I stand, in rapturous amaze.

PHORCYDES.

This spirit, certainly, some sense displays.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

How hath it chanced, that poet ne'er did raise
To ye, great triform mystery, hymns of praise?
How is it, that ye never met my sight
By the sculptor chiselled? worthier his skill to excite
Than Juno, Pallas, or fair Aphrodite.

PHORCYDES.

Immured in stillest night, and solitude,
On the world, as yet, we've had no wish to obtrude.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Why should that be? How ye would enchant all eyes!
Here, ye see no one—ye are seen by none.
There, ye would be honoured as divinities,
And pomp and art would place ye on a throne;
There, out of marble blocks, by dexterous sleight,
Some god is daily stepping forth to light;
There——

PHORCYDES.

——Peace! we would without desires abide.
Of what avail, to be seen, to have homage done?
Born amidst darkness, unto night allied,
And, even to ourselves, almost unknown.

Digitized by Google

MEPHISTOPHELES.

In that case, there is not much to be said:
Others can but transfer themselves to others, wholly.
But one eye and one tooth serves for each head,
In your mythologic form: existing—solely—
Doubly,—and triply—for at first, I grieve
To say, I did not the third form perceive.

ONE OF THEM.

How think ye—shall it go round for inspection?

THE OTHERS.

Let's try it without either eye or tooth.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

That's a step onward in the right direction:
I'd wish to know the perfect form, in sooth.

ONE OF THEM.

Oh! that is very easily effected:
Let the one eye be looked at in profile,
And let the one tooth be in line projected;
That we are sisters, then, at once, you'll feel.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Much honoured, 'tis so!

PHORCYDES.

'Tis so.

MEPHISTOPHELES (*as Phorcyad in profile*).

Look upon
Old Chaos his right well-beloved son!

Digitized by Google

PHORCYDES.

And Chaos' undisputed daughters, we.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

I stand reproved. Oh, shame! Hermaphrodites.

PHORCYDES.

If, formed anew, two eyes, two teeth, had we,
Of your three new sisters, which the most delights?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

I must withdraw myself from every eye,
The old one in hell's lake to terrify. [*Off.*

ROCKY INLETS OF THE ÆGEAN SEAS.

The moon abiding in the zenith.

SIRENS, *on the surrounding cliffs, banquetting, playing on the flute, and singing.*

GODDESS, by Thessalian spells,
Hath been drawn down thy weird light,
To where ocean sinks and swells,
Often at the noon of night—
Beauty with wild uproar weaving,
To gild the treacherous scene—

Digitized by Google

And the tremulous billows, heaving,
Have owned thy magic serene.
Homage to thee all cheerfully pay.
Beautiful Luna! be gracious, we pray.

NEREIDS AND TRITONS,
(*as sea-monsters*).

Thorough the broad sea, thrill
Sounds vehement and shrill:
Rouse natives of the deep!—
Where storm-lashed whirlpools sweep,
The stillest ground is ever;
Kind songs invite us thither.
See how we, in rapturous glee,
With gold chains, crowns, and zones,
Studded thick with precious stones,
Adorn ourselves to go.
All these to you we owe,
Fair charmers of our bay:
Wrecked here, what various treasure,
Hath it oft been your pleasure
To lure to us, by your lay.

SIRENS.

Mark ye: in yon calm clear seas,
Fishes lead what lives they please,
Merry, sportive, free from care:
May ye, of this fact aware,

Digitized by Google

Meet our friendly wishes,
And be more like fishes.

NEREIDS AND TRITONS.

That, ere we hither came,
Was to the senses plain.
Sisters, brothers, away!
This lovely voyage, today,
Must needs prove, to their wishes,
That we are more like fishes. [*They withdraw.*

SIRENS.

In a twinkling, off they are,
With a gentle breeze and fair!
Vanishing from this loved place,
Bound to the isle of Samo-Thrace,
Which the Cabiri's ancient race
Long hath ruled, with sovereign sway—
Strange and wondrous deities, they,
Who, self-formed, know not what they are.
What think they to accomplish there?
Gracious Luna! still on high
Keep thy throne, in the purple sky,
That all, night-like, may abide,
That day force us not to hide.

THALES,

(*on the bank, to Homunculus*).

With pleasure I conduct thee to old Nereus—

Digitized by Google

In fact, we're at no great distance from his cave;
But mind, that he's an ill-conditioned, serious,
Hard-headed sort of personage, to brave.
He's out of sorts, because the human race
To let him set them right have not the grace.
Yet is futurity to him laid open,
And hence, profound respect from all he hath won;
All honour the prophetic news thus spoken;
Moreover, many a noble act he hath done.

HOMUNCULUS.

Let us dash on, then; let us put to the proof
Both glass and flame! they'll stand it well enough.

NEREUS.

Doth sound of human voices smite mine ear?
What ire, at once, in my heart's depths they stir!
Fitted to reach the gods' exalted station,
Yet of their own vile selves condemned to the imitation.
Since I strove to direct the best, to what was best,
From the olden time, I now might, god-like, rest,
And show, as prophesied, each accomplished deed,
Because, to my advice men gave no heed.

THALES.

And yet, man trusts thee, greybeard of the seas.
Oh, wisest oracle! drive us not from hence!
Thee, to show this flame our ancestors, may it please!
Who in thy counsels placed implicit confidence.

Digitized by Google

NEREUS.

Counsel! that ne'er availed, and never will:
Sage words congeal in the petrifying ear,
And leave folks, as they found them, self-willed still:
Reproof but stimulates the very deed to dare.
What fatherly warning I to Paris gave,
Ere a strange beauty did his will enslave.
There, on the Grecian shore he frankly stood,
And I informed him what, in the spirit, I saw:
The hot air smoked; the sky, like a crimson flood,
Over a bloody battle-scene, did glow.
Troy's day of doom, embalmed in the sacred rhymes,
That will show the dread event to far-descending times.
The bold one, heedless of the prophecy,
Followed his lusts—and Ilion ceased to be:
A stiff, gigantic corse, all functions ceased,
To the Pindus eagle a right welcome feast.
Did I not make known to Ulysses, too,
The Cyclops' cruelty—the arts of Circe?
To what good purpose, I should wish to know?
By his unsteadfast mind, placed at their mercy,
'Till, long perplexed, and late enough, Fate bore
His bark, o'er the favouring waves, to a hospitable shore.

THALES.

Such conduct needs must give thy wisdom pain;
Yet pray bestow thy favour once again.

Digitized by Google

The pleasure, from an ounce of thanks, you get,
Outweighs ingratitude's hundred-weight of debt.
Besides, we only ask for what's worth winning:
Fain would this youngster make a wise beginning.

NEREUS.

Vex not my rare complacent mood—away!
My daughter, harshly torn from me, today—
And her sisters, too, the charming Dorides,
The peerless belles, the graces of the seas—
I shall behold: to her must all give place,
Pre-eminent in beauty and in grace.
Nor your classic soil, nor Olympus self, doth bear
Forms that in grace and beauty may compare
With Galatea's—fairest of the fair.
Drawn by the water-dragons—Neptune's team—
Uprising from the sea, like a heavenly dream,
'Midst exhalations of all lovely tints,
Woven from the purest foam of the pure element,
That, as a gauzy veil, are round her blent,
She comes, in the pearl car bright with changing hues,
The same the Paphian goddess erst did use,
When earth was blessed with her resplendent presence,
In whom is shrined of beauty's self the essence.
And she, from the day Anadyomene fled,
Hath been, by the Paphians, worshipped in her stead;
And, as true heiress, claimeth for her own
The fane-crowned city, and the chariot-throne.—

Digitized by Google

Away! in such proud, joyous hour, 'tis wrong
For a sire to have hate in his heart, or reproaches on his tongue:
Away to Proteus! and ask him to explain
How he transforms himself, and how man became.

[*Withdraws himself, sea-ward.*

THALES.

No advantage from this visit hast thou gained:
He passeth from our presence, Proteus-wise:
Lo, here he stood, but what have we obtained?
Nought, save what tends to puzzle and surprize.
But, for once, take his counsel—you're in lack
Of some one's. Let's off, on another track.

[*They withdraw.*

SIRENS (*on the rocks above*).

What, in the ocean-depths, do we spy,
Plain as a white sail against the sky!
Lo! 'tis fair mermaidens, upward gliding,
The gurgling sparkling waters dividing.
Let us descend, to welcome them here.—
Do their voices reach any one's ear?

NEREIDS AND TRITONS.

Hither we bring, in our arms upheld,
What to please ye can scarcely fail.
Gods, in a turtle's giant shield:
Such guests, your choicest songs must hail.

Digitized by Google

SIRENS.

Small forms, but mighty power, have these
Most ancient honoured deities,
Who save from shipwreck on the seas.

NEREIDS AND TRITONS.

A peaceful feast to celebrate,
The Cabiri we bring hither;
Where they rule, in sacred state,
Neptune's favourable ever.

SIRENS.

We'll stand near you:
When the ship parts,
Use your potent arts,
And save the crew.

NEREIDS AND TRITONS.

Three, we withdraw:
One obeys not the call;
He says he's the law,
And must needs guide ye all.

SIRENS.

How one god mocks at another! still
Do homage for favours, come whence they will,
And dread, and deprecate ill.

NEREIDS AND TRITONS.

Is seven their true number?

SIRENS.

Where keep you the three?

Digitized by Google

NEREIDS AND TRITONS.

To that we say mum, here;
But found, they may be,
On Olympus' height, yonder,
If properly sought;
Besides, an eighth one, there,
On whom none have thought.
Expect us again here,
When all's as it ought.—
These wretches unique,
With an unexplainable
Eagerness, seek
The unattainable.

SIRENS.

Where we live, there are
Who will pray and work hard,
In sun, moon, or star,
To obtain their reward.

NEREIDS AND TRITONS.

How our fame will be increased!
We shall shine at this ocean-feast.

SIRENS.

The demi-gods of ancient days,
Thirsting for renown,
Wheresoever gleamed its rays,
Fearlessly ran it down.

Digitized by Google

Bravo! heroes of old Greece,
Ambitious, bold, and fiery!
They obtained the golden fleece,
Ye, the famed Cabiri.

[*Repetition, sung by all.*]

They obtained the golden fleece,
We, ye, the famed Cabiri.

[*Nereids and Tritons, moving by.*]

HOMUNCULUS.

Well! these deformities, when looked at near,
Are of the very coarsest earthen-ware;
Yet many a hard head, it seems, they craze,
And fill the wise with reverence and amaze.

THALES.

For that which is mysterious, all men lust:
Medals are always valued by their rust.

PROTEUS (*unobserved*).

The most wonderful, hey, the most respectable!
My heart rejoiceth to hear that old fable!

THALES.

Proteus! where art thou?

PROTEUS,

(*ventriloquising: now, apparently near, now distant*).

Here!—and here!

THALES.

Pho! I addressed thee wrong: thou art not where

Digitized by Google

Either sound comes from. But what useful end
Serves it, to waste time with so old a friend?

PROTEUS (*as if from a distance*).

Farewell.

THALES (*whispering to Homunculus*).

Flare up! for he is close at hand:
He's curious as a fish, and so,
Even if he were a resinous brand,
Close to the flame he'd surely go.

HOMUNCULUS.

Of light, there shall be no lack:
Guide it, lest the glass should crack.

PROTEUS (*in the form of a gigantic turtle*).

What light is that, so beautiful and clear?

THALES (*covering Homunculus*).

Well! doth it please thee? why not, then, come here,
And, in a manly form, thyself uprear?
To see't, or not, depends upon my favour,
And that depends upon thy good behaviour.

PROTEUS (*nobly formed*).

Thou'st not forgotten philosophic tricks.

THALES.

Thy love of change, I find, still by thee sticks.

[*Unveils Homunculus.*

PROTEUS (*astonished*).

A shiny dwarf! its like was never seen.

Digitized by Google

THALES.

It seeks advice: to exist 'twould fain begin.
'Tis just as I first found the little pet,
Though come to the world, no part of it, as yet—
A mere nonentity, but for the glass,
Yet eager to corporeal form to pass;
Prompt to embrace whate'er is on its track,
Spiritual attributes it doth not lack.

PROTEUS.

Thou art indeed a virgin-son, I see:
Thou art already, ere thou ought'st to be.

THALES (*whispering*).

Also, another character is quite
Obvious to me—that he's hermaphrodite.

PROTEUS.

If so, the sooner he'll begin to flourish;
But here, 'twould be in vain such hope to nourish.
In the wide sea thou must commence thy race!
There, Being is grasped within the smallest space;
There it delights to gorge the smallest prey;
There, by degrees advancing, makes its way
Onward, to wider, higher destinies,
Deeming each step the highest, till to the next it rise.

HOMUNCULUS.

It becomes green: fragrance delights me now:
Already I perceive the soft air blow!

Digitized by Google

PROTEUS.

That I believe, thou most enamoured youth!
And yonder 'tis far pleasanter, in sooth.
Away, then, from this narrow tongue of shore:
Its atmosphere's insufferably thin.
Even now, we're within sound of the ocean's roar;
So, prithee, hasten thither, and begin.

THALES.

And I'll go also, whatsoe'er betides.

HOMUNCULUS.

What three-fold memorable spirit-strides!

TELCHINES OF RHODES,

On Hippocampi and Sea-dragons, bearing Neptune's Trident.

CHORUS.

The invincible trident of Neptune bear we,
Wherewith he appeases the boisterous sea.
The Thunderer, putting his storm-clouds in motion,
Replied with loud roar to the roar of the ocean:

Digitized by Google

From on high, his barbed lightnings incessantly flashed,
As, below, waves on mountain-waves foamingly dashed;
Whilst all, 'midst the wild uproar helplessly placed,
Were flung hither and thither in th' intricate waste.
But, today, he permits us to rule o'er the tide,
And, amidst calm and splendour, we festively glide.

SIRENS.

Hail to Phœbus' earliest ray,
Herald of serener day!
That twice-blessed hour greeting,
That Luna and her brother meet in.

TELCHINES.

Most beautiful goddess, with bright bow, on high,
Who thy brother's praise hearest with rapturous joy!
And, as the eternal hymn peals from his isle,
Blessest Rhodes with thy softest and loveliest smile!
With radiant glances o'er ocean and earth,
He begins the day's course, and the pæans burst forth!
One waft of Zephyr's fan, one bright ray, and from sleep
The isle starts forth to life, as he glides from the deep;
And the mountains, the cities, the shores, and the main,
All look lovely and clear, as befits his domain;
And he sees, 'bove a thousand proud structures, his own
Arise, in magnificence first and alone.
It was we—in man's worthier form—it was we
First embodied that glorious divinity.

Digitized by Google

PROTEUS.

Leave these to sing and boast: at best,
Dead forms are a mockery, and a jest,
To the life-rays of the glorious sun.
The moulds are formed with anxious toil,
The metal poured therein, like oil;
And what have they, when this is done?
A mighty statue, raised on high,
Rewards their pains, and vanity:
Comes an earth-shock—rends the thing in twain,
To be fused and melted o'er again!
All earthly drudgery and turmoil
Are but vain and useless toil.
Behold the Protean dolphin! he
Will bear thee through the eternal sea.

[*He changes himself.*

'Tis done! bestride my curving back,
And rarest joys thou shalt not lack:
I make thee of the ocean free.

THALES.

That noble wish to him award,
To seize on past creations;
Be with thy mightier works prepared:
Those countless transformations—
Myriads on myriads, great and small—
Through which thou must have ran,

Digitized by Google

From the eternal type of all,
Down to the time of Man.

HOMUNCULUS *ascends the Protean dolphin.*

PROTEUS.

Haste, spirit! haste,
Through the watery waste!
To live, like me,
Unbounded and free.
Should you aspire
To aught that's higher,
Sealed is your doom—
Man you become.

THALES.

Hereafter he'll return: all's right, I see!
A famous man, in his day, he's sure to be.

PROTEUS (*to Thales*).

To become one of thy sort he won't fail.
Thou appearest long past thy day, I trow:
'Midst ghost-throngs, shadowy and pale,
I've marked thee, centuries ago.

SIRENS (*on the rocks*).

Lo, round the moon's orb, moves
A little cloud-ring bright!
'Tis passion-kindled doves,
With wings of snowy white:

Digitized by Google

Paphia's glowing couriers they,
Her presence to announce.
Love and joy will cheer the day:
Perfect, we the feast pronounce.

NEREUS (*approaching Thales*).

Well might a nightly wanderer,
Yon luminous haze,
On which you gaze,
A halo round the moon, aver;
And yet, true spirits, as we are,
Is the bright band circling there—
Doves that escort my daughter's car;
And, as it cleaves its pearly way,
O'er head, in airy circles, play.
A rare and wondrous breed are they,
From the most ancient times descended,
And with the utmost care attended.

THALES.

In my opinion, what suits best
A faithful lover's mood,
Is, within its own warm, quiet nest,
To live, in sacred solitude.

PSELLI AND MARSI,
(*on sea-oxen, sea-calves, and rams*).

From caves of Cyprus' rugged coast—
By rude tempests vext and tossed,

Digitized by Google

But, nor crushed by Titan shocks,
Nor wrecked, by sea-god, on the rocks—
As in days for ever gone,
But wide and far for pleasure known,
Uninjured, Cypria's pearly car
Gently o'er the waves we bear,
And in it, Beauty's lovely heir;
A shining network shrouds her grace,
Woven of the waves' light foam:
Fairest of the younger race,
See that lovely daughter come!

SIRENS.

Round the car where beauty's riding,
To augment her queenly state,
In progressive circles gliding,
Splendid serpents undulate.
Ye, that with wilder graces please,
Ye buxom Nereids! hither, bear
The young and delicate Dorides,
And Galatea, peerless fair!
Who may, in loveliness, compare
With that transcendent deity,
Worthiest of immortality—
Beautiful Anadyomene.
Now, as spouses, kind and dear,
Still more tempting they appear.

Digitized by Google

DORIDES,

(in chorus, drawn by a troop of dolphins, and passing near Nereus).

From thy pure orb's growing splendour,
Luna! lend us light and shade;
That young love-pairs' wishes tender
May, fitly, to our sire be said.

[*To Nereus.*]

These young boys, sire, we, to save
From shipwreck, did the tempest brave;
We snatched them from the breaking wave—
That did, for their destruction, rave—
And throbbing pulses to them gave;
For this deed, a boon we crave:
Burning kisses we must have.—
Bless them with thy benignant favour.

NEREUS.

The prize is doubly valued, ever,
When good deeds and inclination chime together.

DORIDES.

Father, praise our noble deed!
Father, what we ask, concede!
Oh, to clasp them, pantingly,
To heaving bosoms, ever young!
Oh, to have them ever nigh,
Immortal transports to prolong!

Digitized by Google

NEREUS.

Your valued prizes might be loved, indeed,
If they to make ye human could succeed.
I may not, of myself, allow,
What Zeus only can bestow.
Besides, the waves—that, to and fro,
Balance, move, and keep ye moving—
Would ne'er admit of constant loving:
'Twould tire out inclination, I feel sure;
So set the easy indolent things on shore.

DORIDES.

Fair boys! we love you from the heart,
Yet must, in sorrow, from you part.
We prayed the gods for constancy,
But they would not so decree.

THE YOUNGSTERS.

Bold sailor-boys ye snatched from the wave:
And no greater boon we crave.
We are fearless, frank, and free:
We ask no nobler destiny.

GALATEA *approaches in the Shell-car.*

NEREUS.

Is't thou, my darling?

GALATEA.

Oh, my sire! Oh, bliss!
Stay, dolphins, stay! I'm longing for his kiss.—

Digitized by Google

NEREUS.

Already past!—how gracefully,
In tremulous circles, she glides by!
Ah, the tender sweet emotion!
My heart's borne with her o'er the ocean!
Even a single glance, from her,
Serves to cheer one through the year.

THALES.

Hail! hail to the news so glorious!
That maketh me, with joy, uproarious.
The shining one Truth hath penetrated:
All, through water originated!
All, through water, is renovated!
Ocean, grant us thy aid eternally!
If thou didst not the clouds supply,
Would earth's emerald drapery be?
Or the streams, that wind, from sources high,
Through beauty and fertility?
What were the mountains, the plains, the earth,
Didst thou not feed life's aye-renewing birth?
'Tis thy bosom that all fresh life upholdeth.

ECHO, (*chorus of the whole collected circle*).

'Tis thy bosom that all fresh life unfoldeth.

NEREUS.

Now, yon countless throngs appear
To close, and lengthen in extent

Digitized by Google

Their circling groups; and seem to stare,
In one direction, most intent.—
Near Galatea's pearly car—
As by partial glimpses viewed—
Gleameth, now, a radiant star,
Through the circling multitude:
How it shines, amidst the throng—
Though so distant—clear and strong!
Like a lovelight, ever near,
Ever constant to the fair.

HOMUNCULUS.

'Midst this friendly moisture wandering
All seems beautiful around.

PROTEUS.

From this moisture, life-engendering,
Thy lamp drew its light and sound.

NEREUS.

What new mystery is yonder, amidst the host, rising
At Galatea's feet, with a lustre surprising?
Now fierce, and now charmingly soft, glows the fire,
As if stirred, within, by the pulse of desire.

THALES.

'Tis Homunculus, led on by Proteus: 'tis the various
Indications, it gives, of a longing imperious.
I foresee many an inward throe—many a groan!
How it dashes itself 'gainst the beautiful throne!

Digitized by Google

How intensely it brightens! 'tis already o'erflowing.—

SIRENS.

What fiery wonder is't, yonder, so glowing—
To the waves such unwonted resplendence bestowing?
Towards one another they sparklingly bound,
And, commingling, the bright pearly shell-throne surround.
How the red body glares on the night-like scene round!
All, that circles about it, the fire hath o'er-ran:
For so Eros wills, from whom all things began.

Hail to the ocean! hail to the waves!
Hail to the friendly air!
Hail to the rich and mysterious caves!
Hail to adventures rare!
Hail! all hail!
Hail, to fire! both land and deep,
By a holy light, we explore:
Here ye all high holiday keep:
All hail, ye elements four!

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

ACT III.

Before the Palace of Menelaus in Sparta.

HELENA *advances; and a Chorus of captive Trojan Females.*
PANTHALIS, *leader of the Chorus.*

HELENA.

I, THE much admired, the much upbraided Helena,
Come from the ocean-shore where first we disembarked,
Dizzy, even yet, with the swinging waves' quick motion;
Over their high rough backs borne, from the Phrygian plain—
Through the favour of Neptune, by the power of Eurus—
To the deep treacherous gulf of my father-land.
Still, on the coast, stays King Menelaus, rejoicing
In the return of himself and his bravest warriors.—
Lonely, proud palace, thou standest to bid me welcome,
As I once more approach thy halls, that my sire, Tyndarus,
Raised on the sloping side of the mountain of Pallas;
Here, with Clytemnestra, in sisterly affection,
Here, too, with Castor and Pollux, in happy childhood,
I grew, to excel all the splendid dames of Sparta.

Digitized by Google

I greet thy honoured portals, that once did open widely,
When the chosen amongst many—Menelaus—
In bridegroom state approached me, with flaming torches.
Unfold them once again, that I the king's command
May faithfully execute, as becomes his consort.
Receive your queen! receive, too, the faithful followers—
My barrier 'gainst the assaults of eventful fate!
For, since the time when last, with light heart, I did leave thee
For Cytherea's fane, as my clear duty prompted—
From whence I was snatched away by the Phrygian robber—
Hath much of strange adventure chanced, that, far and wide,
Mankind narrate with pleasure, but which one's self cannot
With pleasure hear—for eager rumour shapes it into fables.

CHORUS.

Scorn not—oh, magnificent woman!
The noblest human inheritance;
Thou art the honoured possessor
Of earth's most exalted blessing:
Beauty's fame, that surpasseth all other.
Before the hero his name is sounded;
Proudly strideth he on;
But, before the all-conquering spirit of beauty,
The most inflexible hero bows.

HELENA.

No more!—with my husband there did I disembark,
And to the city hath he sent me on before him;

Digitized by Google

But what his secret thoughts are, I may not divine.
Hither come I, as his spouse? come I, as a queen?
Come I, a sacrifice for the monarch's jealous pangs,
And for the long-enduring adverse fate of the Greeks?
Am I saved from destruction, or, as a victim, caught?
I know not: destiny and rumour, the immortals only
Can unravel; but his ambiguous conduct,
Even now, so near the threshold of my childhood's home,
Doth harrass me with its dark and menacing presence.
For previously, in the hollow bark, that consort
Rarely upon me gazed, and spoke no refreshing words;
Yet, thought he danger nigh, he placed himself beside me.
But soon, as along the deep-bayed shores of Eurotas
Sailing, the beak of the foremost ship greeted the land,
As if moved by a god, he spake: "Halt here, my warriors;
Here, on the ocean-strand, in martial order ranged,
I muster your brave files."—"But do thou"—turning to me—
"Ascend the winding marge of the sacred Eurotas,
Through the moist flower-pranked pastures, where the war-
steeds graze,
Holding thy way still onward, 'till the beautiful plain
Thou reachest, whereon Lacedæmon was upraised,
'Midst circling hills, where once abounding harvests waved.
Thence repair to the proudly-towering regal palace,
And assemble, for me, the handmaids that I left
Collected, in the charge of the old prudent housekeeper.

Digitized by Google

These will, before thee, spread all the rich treasure-stores,
Thy sire's bequest, which I, alike in war or peace,
Augmented constantly. Thou wilt find all cased up,
And ranged in their wonted order, as I left them:
It is the sovereign's high prerogative, to find—
Returning to his faithful household—each and all
In their several posts and places, as he left them;
For, of himself, nought hath the servant power to alter."

CHORUS.

With the long-augmenting treasures,
Rejoice thine eyes—thine heart!
The costly chain's bright links,
The jewelled crown,
Will proudly, as of yore,
Beseem thy queenly state.
On—on, and cite them forth!
At once thou 'lt be obeyed.
Oh, to see beauty vieing with, excelling,
Gold, pearls, and precious stones!

HELENA.

Thus, further, ran my royal lord's commanding words:
" When thou hast well observed that all is in due order,
So many tripods as thou deemest may suffice,
Then take, and the various vessels, requisite,
From hallowed custom, at high festivals, for the offering:
Cauldron and bowl and platter, and the lofty beakers,

Digitized by Google

Filled with the purest water from the sacred fount;
Also the dry wood, of quick flame susceptible,
Cause thou to be prepared; and, lastly, fail thou not
To have, there, placed at hand the sacrificial knife.
What may be needed, else, to thy own care I leave."
Thus finished he, my departure urgently pressing;
But placed at my disposal nought with the breath of life,
That he to slay, in honour of the gods, intendeth.
Doubtful doth this remain; but further care I've none:
Placing myself, and all, at the high gods' dispose;
Who, what they list, accomplish—be it good or ill
In the esteem of those who mortality endure.
Already, oft, hath that ponderous axe been upheaved
For the earth-bowed beasts' devoted necks, in sacrifice;
But either meddling demons, or intervening gods,
Turning the edge aside, have stayed the accomplishment.

CHORUS.

Perplex not thy mind, with thought
Of what shall come to pass.
Royal lady, advance!
Take heart! take heart!
Unexpectedly, to mortals,
Both good and evil come;
Announced, we trust in neither.
Troy flamed, and saw we not,
Irrevocable, ignominious death

Digitized by Google

Stare in our faces, then?
Yet, here we are
Assembled, joyously, beneath thy sway;
Standing, in sunshine, 'neath the purple heavens;
By the surpassing loveliness
Of earth's fairest scenes, surrounded;
And thyself—
Of all our happiness the source—
Graciously smiling on us.

HELENA.

Be it as Fate decrees! my duty plainly points
That I at once ascend the steps of the royal palace,
Which, so long deserted, doth now before me stand,
In such startling and such desolate reality!
How joyously, in childhood, have I vaulted up
This stately flight! but now—I know not how it is—
The courageous heart, and light elastic step, desert me.

CHORUS.

Oh! sisters!
Oh! sorrowing prisoners!
Cast ye all pains in the distance:
To her father's household hearth—
After long-lengthened absence,
But with so much the stronger feeling of joy—
Returning in safety, with us,
The partakers of her delight,

Digitized by Google

The royal lady doth come.

Praise to the holy,
The joy-restoring,
The homeward-conducting gods!
Floats the deliverer's wings
O'er the fluttering captive, with pining desire,
From the prisoning battlements, looking, in vain,
With soul-consuming grief.

From distant Ilium's mounds
Snatched by a god hath she been,
And borne to the halls of her sire,
Where, of innocent childhood,
The indefinable joys and griefs
Are freshly remembered, still.

PANTHALIS (*as leader of the Chorus*).

Cease longer to pursue the joyous course of song,
And to the winged portals turn your anxious glance!
Sisters, what do I see? turns not the queen again,
With eager, hasty, agitated steps, towards us?—
In the halls of thy childhood, mighty queen, what greeting
Hath hailed thy return, that can agitate thee thus?
From thy faithful followers, oh, do not conceal it!
I see aversion plainly written on thy brow:
I see a noble anger struggling with surprise.

Digitized by Google

HELENA,

(*who has left the folding-doors open—agitated*).

Vulgar fear becometh not the daughter of Zeus,
And low-winged terrors sweep below her towering head;
Yet, that monstrosity, offspring of ancient night—
From the beginning, in multiform shapes, ascending,
Like glowing clouds, from the mountain's fiery throne—
Upstarting thus, would a hero's firm breast have shaken.
What ominous Stygian horrors have, today,
Hailed my return, as I stepped o'er the long-desired threshold
Of my childhood's home! and, like an unwelcome stranger,
I'm driven from its portals. But I yield not further:
No! restored again to the bright day, I defy thee,
Whosoe'er thou art, horrible, malignant power!
A purifying consecration I'll devise,
That the household hearth may welcome its rightful lady.

LEADER OF THE CHORUS.

We pray thee, make known to thy servants, noble lady,
What hath chanced, that we thy dignity may support.

HELENA.

What *I* saw, with your own eyes *ye* shall also see,
If back again, into her depths of gloom and wonder,
That form, the ancient night doth not instantly devour.
But what has happened ye shall also know by words:
As I solemnly trod the vestibule of the palace,
Thinking only of my more immediate duty,

Digitized by Google

I was astounded at the all-pervading silence:
No living forms advanced, no sound the ear saluted;
No curious glance, no sign of domestic industry;
No maid, no housekeeper, to welcome my approach—
A courtesy, elsewhere, observed even to the stranger.
But, towards the ancient hearth as I did advance,
There saw I, seated by the glimmering ashes' relics,
A veiled gigantic woman, that did rather seem
In profoundest meditation, than asleep.
With commanding words, I bade her rise and obey me—
Deeming her the housekeeper, whom my spouse's caution
Had placed in full authority when he departed—
Yet, undisturbed, sat the immovable one;
And at length, when I threatened, she did only move
Her right arm, beckoning me away from hearth and hall.
Enraged, I turned myself away from her, and sped,
Even up the steps where the adorned thalamus upheaves
Itself; unto the treasure-room approached I near,
When lo! the hag, from the ground, quickly upraised herself,
And, imperiously my way obstructing, showed—
Huge, meagre, with hollow and blood-disturbing eyes—
Her monstrous form, that eye and spirit confounded.
But I cannot give to words a bodily form,
Nor from words could your minds create such a wonder-shape.
But gaze on her yourselves: lo! she ventures forth to light!
But here have we lawful rule until the king arrives.

Digitized by Google

The terror of all night-born things, the friend of beauty—
Phœbus—will tame her down, or drive her off to Hades.

[*Phorcyas steps forth on the threshold, between the portals.*]

CHORUS.

Much I've experienced, though youthful curls
Still wave lustrously round my brow.
Horrors on horrors have I beheld;
Warlike lament have I heard, for Ilium,
When it fell.

Through the cloud-shrouding, dust-raising host
Of thronging warriors, of old, o'er the plain,
The gods' dread voices I have heard sounding;
I have heard discord fearfully shouting
From the walls.

Ah! as yet they stood—Ilium's walls—
But the glowing flames were advancing!
Already, from neighbour to neighbour,
Hither and thither, they extend;
Like the driving waves of the flood,
Through the night-like devoted city,
They proceed.

Flying through smoke and heat, I beheld—
And fitfully blazing flame-tongues—

Digitized by Google

The approach of fearful and angry gods,
Stalking wonder-forms, phantoms gigantic,
As I fled.

Saw I, or did the spirit create,
Wounded with anguish, such dread shapes,
Never may I declare; but this
Embodied horror, I gaze on,
I know, most assuredly, I
Might grasp, did not fear of the peril
Withhold me.

But which of the daughters of Phorcys—
For to *that* race must I compare thee—
Art thou? Perchance of the horror-born,
Of the one-toothed, one-eyed, thou art,
Amongst three.

Dost thou dare to appear, scarecrow!
By the side of consummate beauty,
'Neath Phœbus' glance? But come forth!
He hath not seen such ugliness:
For his sacred eyes Hades' shades
Have pierced never.

But unto mortals, alas!
Relentless Fate doth ordain,
That the mysterious, longing desire—

Digitized by Google

That stirs the heart, through the eyes
Drank in—of beauty, should ever
Be unblest.

Hear us! If rashly thou opposest,
All the most dreadful curses shall fall
On thee, even from the mouths
Of the lovely, that ever the gods
Invented.

PHORCYAS.

The saying's old, but the sense remains deep and true,
That shame and beauty, hand in hand, did never yet
Pursue the same course over the green plains of earth.
In both, an ancient deeply-rooted hatred dwelleth;
So that, wheresoe'er they chance to meet each other;
Each adversary on her rival turns her back,
And eagerly moves off, to get more wide apart—
Shame-afflicted, but courageously-minded, beauty—
'Till they, at last, by Orcus' hollow night are embraced:
Unless old age, the defacer, previously tames them;
Such, upon earth, is ever the conduct they pursue.
Ye do I find, ye bold ones! from the far-land, now
With arrogance o'er-flowing: even as the cranes,
On their hoarse loud-resounding flight, high over-head,
In lengthened files, down to the earth with harsh croak calling,
That the silent wanderer to look upward doth allure;

Digitized by Google

Yet lag they onward, still, their continuous way,
And he pursueth his: so will it be with us.
Who are ye, I ask, that before the monarch's palace,
Maniacal and wild, like drunkards, dare to riot?
Who are ye, that, against the mistress of the household,
Are howling, as the hound-packs do against the moon?
Think ye, it may be concealed from me, what race ye are?
Captured spoils of the war; a brood devoted to slaughter;
Provokers of manly lust, seduced and seducing;
Warrior and burgher, both, ye deprive of energy.
Your tribe, as I behold, methinks a locust swarm
Sudden descends, and spreads o'er the green crops of the land.
Consumers of the toil of others! dainty-eating
Annihilators of young budding prosperity!
Conquered, market-bought, bartered merchandize, ye are!

HELENA.

Who before the mistress, looking askance, rails at the servant,
Dares to rebel against the ruler's household rights;
Her, and her alone, it befitteth, the praiseworthy
To honour, as to punish what may be unseemly;
But I am right well contented with their services;
They were my faithful companions through Ilium's siege;
When her high strength, long vainly assailed, gave confidence.
Nor less faithful they, when called on to endure
The wonder-movements, the trouble-full vicissitudes,
Since; where, usually, each but thinks of self as the dearest.

Digitized by Google

Hence, from the faithful band, like service here I expect.
Not what is the servant, asks the lord, but how he serves;
Therefore be thou silent, and grin at them no more.
Hast thou taken due care of the palace? until now,
Thou hast filled its lady's place—that will be fame to thee.
And now, fall back again into thy proper station,
Lest chastisement should take the place of deserved reward.

PHORCYAS.

That great privilege, to threaten the ruler of the household,
The noble spouse, herself, of the god-prospered chief,
By prudent conduct through long years, deserveth well.
So thou, now, the acknowledged one, the ancient place
Of queen and mistress of the palace once more fill'st.
The long-relaxed reins grasp thou, once more, and preside;
The treasures repossess again, and us therewith.
But, above all, defend thou me, the ancient one,
Before this band, which, beside thy swan-like beauty,
Even now, like clumsy, cackling, short-winged geese appear.

CHORUS LEADER.

How hateful, before beauty, showeth hatefulness!

PHORCYAS.

How foolish, before wisdom, showeth foolishness.

ONE OF THE CHORUS.

Announced by thy father Erebus, thy mother Night.

PHORCYAS.

Thou didst learn that speech from thy cousin-german Scylla.

Digitized by Google

ANOTHER OF THE CHORUS.

On thine ancestral tree doth many a monster bloom.

PHORCYAS.

Away! to Orcus hie, there search thy kindred out.

A THIRD.

For thee are much too youthful all who there reside.

PHORCYAS.

That aged man, Tiresias, should be thy wooer.

A FOURTH.

Orion's nurse might have been thy great grand-daughter.

PHORCYAS.

I believe that the harpies nourished thee on garbage.

A FIFTH.

With what nourishest thou thy pampered meagreness?

PHORCYAS.

Not with blood, after which food thou art ever lusting.

A SIXTH.

Greedy for corses, thou, a loathsome corse thyself.

PHORCYAS.

The teeth of vampires glisten in thy open mouth.

LEADER OF THE CHORUS.

How close I shall stop thine, when I say who thou art.

HELENA.

Not in anger, but in grief, do I interpose
To forbid this wordy war's impetuosity.
Than the dissension of faithful heaven-sworn servants,

Digitized by Google

No greater injury can befal the ruler;
Then, no more, the echo of his command hails him;
In the promptly-accomplished deed, full-sounding back;
Instead, confused sounds, and boisterous perplexity,
Self-willed error, and shameful railing at each other.
Nor this alone: ye have, in your unsanctioned anger,
Unblessed images, terror-producers, raised;
They flock around me so, that I, myself, to Orcus
Feel as if torn away, despite these paternal fields.
Memory, is't so? or was't a conceit that seized me?
Lived I all that? am I? shall I, for ever, be
Of each despoiled town the dream and terror-image?
The maidens all are shuddering; but thou, ancient one,
Thou standest passive! Speak to me plain-meaning words!

PHORCYAS.

Who, of long years, the continuous success recalls,
To him, at length, appears a dream such supreme god-favours.
But thou, high-favoured beyond all measure or limit,
In life's arrangements, experienced nought but burning love,
Early and eagerly roused. Already Theseus—
A well-formed man, brawny as Hercules—seized thee, a child.

HELENA.

A slender fawn, of ten years old, he bore me off,
And secured me in Aphidnus' town, in Attica.

PHORCYAS.

Thence, through Castor and Pollux, thou wast quickly freed,
And stood'st begirt by a selected band of heroes.

Digitized by Google

HELENA.

Yet, before all, my secret favour, I willingly
Confess, Patroclus won—Pelides' friend and image.

PHORCYAS.

Yet the parental will wedded thee to Menelaus.
A bold sea-rover he, and strong house-guardian, too.

HELENA.

He gave his daughter; gave, too, the ordering of his realm;
And through his wedded presence sprang forth Hermione.

PHORCYAS.

Yet, whilst he boldly seized on distant Crete's domain,
To thee the lone one came, an all too lovely guest.

HELENA.

Why dost thou remind me of that half-widowed time?
What miseries thence ensued to me, taken by surprise!

PHORCYAS.

On the self-same track, to me—a free-born Cretan—
Captivity befel, and long-continued slavery.

HELENA.

As the manager, here, he appointed thee, at once,
Entrusting unto thee the town and boldly obtained treasury.

PHORCYAS.

Whence thou disappeared'st: to Ilium's tower-girt city,
And inexhaustible love-delights, having wandered.

HELENA.

Remind not of those joys! an all too bitter grief

Digitized by Google

Endlessly spreads itself over my brain and heart.

PHORCYAS.

Yet say they that thou dost appear a twofold image—
In Ilion beheld, and in Egyptia also.

HELENA.

Confuse not, with over-subtlety, the wasted sense·
Even now, I know not what I have been, or am.

PHORCYAS.

They say, too, from the hollow shadow-realm ascending,
Achilles, ardent still, associated, with thee—
His early love—against all conclusion's fitness.

HELENA.

To him, an idol, I, an idol, joined myself.
An utter dream! the words themselves sound dream-like.
Lo! I vanish hence, and become myself an idol.

[*Sinks into the arms of the semi-chorus.*

CHORUS.

Silence! silence!
Evil-glancing, evil-speaking one!
Through those horrible tooth-indented lips,
From that horror-gorge, can aught exhale
Save terrible poison-vapour?

To me, the malignant one—seemingly beneficent,
In the sheep's fleece hiding the grim wolf's fury—
Appeareth far more dreadful

Digitized by Google

Than that three-headed hound of hell, Revenge.
Now, stand we in anxious expectation!
When, how, where, will next burst forth
The maliciousness
Of that dark designing spectre?

Although with friendly comfort teemed, but now,
The Lethe-cleansed auspicious words of favour,
All the past's evanescence thou call'st up,
And ever more of the evil than the good.
Thou over-darkenest, too,
Even the future's mild
Hope-kindled radiance, gleaming from afar.

Silence! silence!
That our royal lady's soul—
Now, to escape hence, ready—
May itself recover.—Earnestly strives
The form! So striveth every form
That the bright sun hath ever shone upon.

[*Helena has recovered herself, and stands again in the midst of them.*

PHORCYAS.

Step forth from fleeting cloud-wreaths, bright sun of this our day! [splendour:
What veiled thee being gone, thou rulest with blinding

Digitized by Google

The world, as thou unfold'st thyself, views thee with favouring glance;
And me with disgust, though with beauty so familiar.

HELENA.

I step, wavering, from the desert that in faintness round me lay.
There, gladly would I repose again, so weary is my frame;
Yet it becometh high-born queens, it becometh all men well,
To nerve themselves to act their part, whate'er threatenings may surprise.

PHORCYAS.

Now stand in thy own greatness—thy own beauty, before us there!
Says thy glance that thou command'st aught? What command'st thou?—Only speak.

HELENA.

Your quarrel's bold interruption to atone for be prepared.
Haste, a victim to provide, as the king hath commanded me.

PHORCYAS.

All is ready in the mansion—platter, tripod, sharpest axe—
To besprinkle, to besmoke, whate'er the offerer may appoint.

HELENA.

The king, as yet, hath not named what.

PHORCYAS.

Oh, lamentation! hath not spoken out?

Digitized by Google

HELENA.

What! it surprises me, thy lamentation!

PHORCYAS.

Oh, lady! thou'rt the victim.

HELENA.

I?

PHORCYAS.

These, too.

CHORUS.

Oh, woe and lamentation!

PHORCYAS.

Beneath the axe ye'll fall.

HELENA.

Horrid! yet my mind misgave.

PHORCYAS.

It seems to me inevitable.

CHORUS.

Ah! and of us? what's to become of us?

PHORCYAS.

An honoured death ye'll die:
Exalted on the high beam that the roof of the gable beareth,
Like thrushes whom the bird-catcher hath snared, ye'll shake the lines.

[*Helena and the Chorus stand astonished and horror-struck, forming a striking well-arranged group.*

Digitized by Google

PHORCYAS.

Phantoms! like forms become petrified, there ye stand!
Ye dread from day to withdraw to which ye not belong.
All mortal spirits—as ye do—most unwillingly
Renounce the sacred sunshine, yet no prayers avail to save
One from such fate. All know this truth, though none are pleased therewith.
Enough! ye are lost, therefore make preparation for the sacrifice.

[*She claps her hands; whereupon appear at the porch masked dwarf forms, which immediately execute, dexterously, her peremptory commands.*

Hither! thou rotund and dusky spectre—hither
Roll ye—approaching slaughter gives all pleasure, here—
The moveable golden-horned altar, to its place;
The axe that hangs glittering on the silver ledge;
Fill to the brim the water-pot, and fetch it hither,
The black blood's contamination to cleanse away;
The broad and costly carpet fetch, and spread on the ground,
Whereon the victim may kneel down in queen-like state,
And where the head, ordained to be so promptly severed,
May with all becoming decency be received.

LEADER OF THE CHORUS.

The queen stands deeply meditating in the midst;
The maidens droop around, like fading meadow-grass;
But to me, the eldest, the duty suitably devolves,

Digitized by Google

Speech to exchange with the high and most ancient one.—
Thou art experienced, wise, appearest to intend
Good to us, although we thoughtlessly insulted thee.
Advise us: what yet possibly remains to save us?

PHORCYAS.

'Tis an easy task.—On the queen, alone, it depends
To save herself: and you will share the advantage.
Resolution, promptitude: both these are essential.

CHORUS.

Worthiest of honour of the Fates! wisest of the Sibyls! Oh!
Keep closed the gold shears, and announce salvation and bright day;
For we feel the waving of suspense, the downward-swinging motion.
Our rounded limbs are fitlier formed to please in the graceful dance,
And, wearied, thence to seek repose on a fond lover's bosom.

HELENA.

Cease this alarm! of the fear of pain I am not capable:
Yet, deliverance would be gratefully acknowledged.
Wisdom—deep meditating—oft most clearly shows
The impossible may be possible.—Say on.

CHORUS.

Speak, say, oh, quickly say! how we the horrid snare may 'scape.
Oh, the thought chokes us! oh, we shall suffer suffocation!

Digitized by Google

Oh, Rhæa! thou, of all the gods, high mother! save us—
save us!

PHORCYAS.

Have ye patience, quietly, to hear described
The long-protracted story?—of very various character it is.

CHORUS.

Oh, patience enough! whilst we hear, we remain alive.

PHORCYAS.

Those that abide at home, noble treasures guarding,
And skilful to build the high-walled dwellings up;
Those it is best, through life-long days, to stick by:
Who once, the line prescribed by sacred nuptial rites,
With fugitive feet, doth wilfully overstep,
Those may readily find again their ancient place,
But around, they'll find all that's not destroyed quite altered.

HELENA.

To what purpose, here, are such well-known sayings uttered?
If thou must needs narrate, touch not on what's vexatious.

PHORCYAS.

'Tis historical; 'tis by no means a reproach.
Menelaus his piratical galleys rowed
From bay to bay, round the winding shores and isles,
Making hostile inroads, and returning with rich spoils.
What multitudes gathered to witness his return!
Then, before Ilium wasted he ten long years;
How many more on his journey home, I know not.

Digitized by Google

What aspect hath now the scene round Tyndarus' palace?
How looked it, once, surrounded by fertility?

HELENA.

Is censuring, then, so incorporated with thy frame,
That, without reviling, thou canst not move thy lips?

PHORCYAS.

So many years hath the mountain vale been abandoned—
That behind Sparta, northward, where the heights ascend,
Where Taygetus, as a lively brook from the pass issuing,
Rolls down to join Eurotas; and, after, through our vale,
With reedy, broad expanse, together they flow on;
Where your favourite swans, in stately pride, are sailing—
That, beyond those heights, a hardy race are established,
Who, out of Cimmerian darkness, thronging came,
And raised and fortified an inaccessible town:
From thence, thy realm and people, they harrass as they please.

HELENA.

Hath such been accomplished? impossible it seems!

PHORCYAS.

Perchance, in twenty years they had time to effect it.

HELENA.

Have they a king? are the banded robbers numerous?

PHORCYAS.

Robbers they are not: but one of them is lord.
I denounce him not. Once, when our home he visited,
He might have swept off all; yet was he satisfied
With a few free-will offerings, which he called not tribute.

Digitized by Google

HELENA.

What appearance has he?

PHORCYAS.

He pleased me at first sight;
A lively, fearless, intellectual man, is he;
And better formed, too, far, than any of the Greeks are.
The name of barbarians people dread; yet 'tis my opinion,
That many of the heroes before Ilium
Proved themselves far more horrible and sanguinary.—
I have proved his noble nature: I confide in him.
And for his city—your own eyes shall judge of that:
All other masonry, compared to its walls, is rude;
Your father's seems to me, and will to you, nought;
Rough, cyclopish, built by cyclops; one rugged stone
Upheaved on others equally rude and unshapely.
But yon's all fitted, levelled, regularly jointed,
Even outside, looking like a polished mirror;
And soaring, with many taper points, up through the sky;
Impossible to scale—the very thought would slide down them.
Within: extensive courts, encircled by vast halls,
And rooms, of every size, for every various purpose;
With lofty clustering columns, and wide-spreading arches—
And smaller shafts and arches curiously intermingling—
Forming long arcades, and lofty balconies, whence
One may look forth, as from an eyrie, on sculptured
Images, and curious tracery, and escutcheons.

Digitized by Google

CHORUS.

What are escutcheons?

PHORCYAS.

Ajax traced, upon his shield,
A gliding serpent, as ye yourselves have witnessed.
Each of those—the seven before distant Thebes—
Did bear on his shield rich and significant carvings;
There moon and stars, as in night's dark vault, one might behold;
Heroic leaders, gods, swords, banners, flaming torches,
Might be seen too; with all else, the dread of peaceful cities.
Also devices of such sort, in flaming hues,
Had the warlike host the king's great grandsire led hither.
There one might behold the lion with flowing mane,
The eagle, beaked and clawed, the horns of the buffalo,
Wings, roses, peacocks' tails, lines, rings, stripes, belts,
Straight, zig-zag, waving, burnished with gold or silver,
Tinted like blood, green plains, blue waves, or sable night.
And such as these are ranged, in sable rows, around
Vast high-domed halls, that are worlds within themselves.
There can ye weave the graceful dance——

CHORUS.

And are there dancers?

PHORCYAS.

A host of lovely golden-headed boys, there are,
Fragrant as Paris, when he first approached the queen.
Their breath—

Digitized by Google

HELENA.

In that last speech, thou quite forgott'st thy station.

PHORCYAS.

At length, thou break'st silence! Say aye, with audible voice,
And with yon city's walls I'll instantly surround thee.

CHORUS.

Oh, say the brief word! save thyself and us together!

HELENA.

Wherefore? Ought I to fear that the king, Menelaus,
Would be so cruel to himself, as to injure me?

PHORCYAS.

Hast thou, then, forgotten how he served Deiphobus—
The death-succeeding heritor of his brother Paris?
How, despite the widowed concubine's entreaties,
Eyes and nose were cut off, and other mutilation
More horrible still, that was perpetrated on him!

HELENA.

In former days, that was—for my sake, he did that.

PHORCYAS.

Mindful of former days, he may do the same by you.
Unshareable is beauty—untransferrable;
Her possessor would destroy who dared even in thought attempt it.

[*Trumpets in the distance, the Chorus crowd together.*

Hark! shrill trumpets strike the ear! how they make one tremble!

Digitized by Google

How jealousy, entering once the human breast, remains
To torture with sharp talons, to remind it ever
Of what it once possessed, and now possesses no more!

CHORUS.

Hear'st thou not the horns sounding? see'st thou not the weapons glancing?

PHORCYAS.

Right welcome to me, the king! my account I shall gladly render.

CHORUS.

But we?

PHORCYAS.

You behold death; 'tis plainly set before your eyes;
It glares—it presses onward: there is no help for you now.

[*Pause.*

HELENA.

I think I will venture into our neighbour's realm.
Thou'rt a contrarious dæmon, I see clearly,
And fear that, for evils, thou wilt exchange the blessings round.
But after all, I will follow thee to that city;
I know the other, and that what in his deep bosom
Lurks, is wrapped in mystery—wholly inaccessible—
If it bode good or evil.—Ancient one, lead on!

CHORUS.

With light feet bounding,
How gladly we set forth!

Digitized by Google

Behind us death;
Once more before us
Strong-built, encircling,
Inaccessible walls,
Secure even as Ilium's,
That only, at last,
By basest art was obtained.

[*A mist spreads itself, veiling the scene behind and around.*

But lo! but how?
Sisters look around ye!
Was not all clearest sunshine?
From Eurotas' sacred flood,
Belted mists now are floating upward.
Already, the lovely reed-crowned shores
Disappear.
Already, the free, the graceful, the proud
Swans, gliding smoothly along,
Alas, I behold no more!

Yet! oh yet!
I hear the sound
Of their hoarse voices, remotely,
Proclaiming approaching death.
Ah if our deaths they also forbode,
If, instead of the promised salvation,
The fate of the white-bosomed race

Digitized by Google

Should be ours!—Woe, to us! woe,
To our swan-begotten queen!

Each one is now begirt
Round, with her own fog circle;
We see not each others' forms.
What has chanced? advance we? no, we but float!
Our footsteps are not on the ground.—
See'st thou nought? starts not, already,
Hermes before us? glanced not
His golden wand, waving us back
To the joyless, horrible twilight
Of Hades' eternal abyss,
Crowded with sorrowful forms?

Lo! at once it darkens, and the mist unlustrous, fades away,
And, frightfully gloomy, dingy walls are advancing to surround
Our free forms, floating motionless, without impulsive power!—
A bottomless chasm! a dungeon court! we are captives once again.

[*Interior Court of the Palace, surrounded by rich fantastic edifices of the middle ages.*

LEADER OF THE CHORUS.

Foolish and premature—true types of womanhood—
Instantly snapping at the baited lure hung forth!

Digitized by Google

Neither prosp'rous, nor adverse fortune, knew ye ever
To endure with equanimity; each the other
Eagerly contradicting—in joy or in pain:
Alike ye laugh, ye weep, ye scold; now, be ye silent,
And attend, with becoming reverence, to what your queen,
Earnestly meditating, deigneth to command.

HELENA.

Where art thou Pythoness?
Go search out where that wondrous hero lord resides:
Announce my approach, and secure me fitting reception.
Earn my thanks, by conducting me speedily to him,
I'd fain conclude this wandering, were't but for repose.

CHORUS LEADER.

In vain, oh queen! thou look'st on all sides round for her;
That hateful form is vanished, or remains, it may be,
In yon mists. How, from out those bays, we came, I know not,
Rapidly, without footsteps; in their labyrinths still,
Perchance she is wandering doubtfully and perplext.
Or perchance she seeks, amidst the mazes of yon splendid halls
Of the excelling city, amongst renowned ones,
The lordly chiefs to give thee fitting reception.
But lo, on high, yonder, a well-dressed moving throng,
Along the galleries, through the gateways, hither, thither,
Bustling!—A distinguished reception, it announces to you.

Digitized by Google

CHORUS.

How my heart is leaping forth! Oh, do but behold!
With what graceful steps descends that friendly youthful band!
How? beneath whose command, form they so well and promptly,
In lordly, regular procession? How graceful!
Oh! the golden ringlets round their radiant brows!
Oh! blooming cheeks, that might well, like the downy peach,
Tempt one to taste! But ah! I shudder at that thought,
For once, so tempted, found I my mouth filled with ashes.

Lo! the most beautiful
Now come towards us!
What do they bear?
To the steps of a throne,
Carpet and seat;
Tent and curtain
Splendidly damasked;
Now overspreads it—
Like cloud-wreaths forming—
Our lady's head.
Already, ascends she—
Summoned to fill it—
The magnificent couch.
Oh, now step forth
With measured grace!

Digitized by Google

But wake the glad song first:
Worthy, thrice worthy, art thou,
Such blessed reception to meet!

[*All the Chorus, having thus spoken, advance gradually to the foot of the throne.*

FAUST, *after a long procession of his retainers have descended, appears alone, at the head of the flight of steps, in the court-dress of a knight of the middle ages, and descends slowly and gracefully.*

LEADER OF THE CHORUS,
(*viewing him attentively*).

Have not the gods—as oft hath been their wont to do,
For a brief space—bestowed this admirable form,
This graceful dignity, this love-enkindling presence?
He needs but undertake, and he—or in men's battles,
Or in beauty's gentler war—of success is certain.
He blends in that consummate form, what I've before admired
Separately in others, as formed to delight and please.
With slow and dignified, earnest yet modest grace,
I see the sovereign approach.—Oh, queen! turn thee and view him.

FAUST,
(*descending, with a person in chains beside*).

In the stead of solemn greetings—most becoming
In themselves, undoubtedly; in the stead

Digitized by Google

Of welcome most respectful, bring I thee
A fettered knight, who, failing in his duty,
Hath caused me fail in mine.—Advance, and kneel
To this high lady, and confess thy guilt.—
Thus stands the case, exalted dame! This man,
With searching eye, from the high tower, to watch,
On yon crowned hill, that swells up from the plain—
With prying, sleepless gaze, to sweep the horizon,
And earth's and sea's broad surface to o'erlook,
And announce to the city the approach of aught
In hostile guise—was placed. Borne by the waves,
A host might have advanced, whilst we were marching
To guard the passes on the landward side.
Thou comest hither unannounced, and hence
The absence of all fitting preparation
For the reception of such high-born guest.
Had malice, and not negligence, prompted him,
Already had he met the death he merits.
But thine alone it is to punish or
To pardon, as to thee may seem most meet.

HELENA.

Thou dost this so high and princely dignity
Of judge propose to me to undertake,
To prove my modesty or rash presumption.
I will, at least, perform his foremost duty,
And patiently hear the accused.—Speak on.

Digitized by Google

LYNCEUS,

(*the watchman of the tower*).

Kneeling, oh, let me worship here,
Whether or life or death be rendered,
For, unto this celestial fair
Is my whole being now surrendered.

To catch the first bright beams of morn,
Towards the east my glances bending,
Of a sudden, lo! the south to adorn,
Saw I this brighter sun ascending.

Instead of valley or crowned height,
Instead of heaven or earth's wide scene,
I, fascinated by her light,
Beheld but this resplendent queen.

Keen as the lynx's glance was mine,
High couching 'midst the forest boughs;
But, now, that boast must I resign—
I cannot from this dark trance rouse.

Duty, nor sense of shame, could awe!
I seemed as to some strange land banished.
I saw but waving mist; I saw
This goddess step forth as it vanished.

Digitized by Google

My soul, forth darting from my eyes,
Of her mild beams drank back the light:
O'erwhelmed by beauty from the skies,
Alas, I am bewildered quite.

Neglect of duty I admit:
The warder's horn I never blew.
Do with me as thou deemest fit:
Beauty all anger doth subdue.

HELENA.

The evil that I caused I dare not punish.—
Woe's me! by so severe a fate pursued,
That I all hearts must so infatuate,
That they nor spare themselves nor worthiest friends!
Captived, misled, battled for, snatched away;
Now I'm coaxed, and now I'm threatened into error,
By heroes or by gods—yea, even by demons.
I am the cause of more and more confusion;
The unwilling cause of quadrupled distress.—
Remove this worthy man, and set him free:
They whom the gods delude are not disgraced.

FAUST.

Oh, queen! astounded, I behold, at once,
Consummate victory and its beauteous source!
I see the bow that sends the arrow forth:
Shaft after shaft it wings: yet still, I bide,

Digitized by Google

With trembling fascination, the keen darts.
I see, full surely, that the feathered bolts
Will city and realm subdue? What am *I* now?
I see rebellion breaking forth at once,
Even within my own impregnable walls!
I already tremble, lest my hosts' allegiance
Be transferred to thee—conquering, unconquerable queen!
What resource have I, myself—my host subdued?
Dare I presume to proffer thee a home?
At thy feet, let a free and loyal knight
Acknowledge thee his sole and rightful sovereign,
And yield to thee his throne and his domains,
And pay thee homage, as a faithful liege.

LYNCEUS,

(*entering with a chest, and men who bear in others*).

Laid at thy feet, oh, mighty queen!
Choice treasures beg a glance of thee:
Compared to it, how poor and mean
The choicest earthly treasures be.

What was I once? what now am I?
Breathe but a wish, and it is done,
Oh, thou! that art, assuredly,
To man, as is to earth the sun,

Digitized by Google

From distant eastern climes we are;
But round the west our power is shown:
A people stretching wide and far—
Its last tribes to its first unknown.

The first swarm fell, the second stood,
The third, advancing spear in hand,
The loss an hundred fold made good,
And swept off thousands from the land.

And onward, onward were we borne!
And realm and province owned our sway.
Desolate, saw the rising morn,
The town we stormed the previous day.

We viewed—a hasty view it was—
And loveliest dames were in our thrall;
And bulls beneath our yoke did pass,
And coursers, swift, and proud withal.

I loved to be the first to o'erlook
What men, of all, most rarely see:
Such booty as my fellows took
Was so much withered grass to me.

Of treasure I pursued the track;
I chased its brighter gleam alone;
Chests, pouches, girdles, did I sack,
And made their precious hoards my own.

Digitized by Google

And piles of gold became my own,
And many a precious stone was mine;
Now, the smaragd will soothe, alone,
When glancing from that breast divine.

Worthless, save trembling from thy ear,
The pearls that deep in ocean grow;
And rubies, save they wreathe the hair
That clusters round thy radiant brow.

Behold the golden harvests, reaped
From many a bloody battle-plain,
Are laid as offerings at thy feet.
Do not my humble gifts disdain.

Graciously smile, and I am blessed.
Thy spacious treasure-halls I'll fill:
Heavy with rich spoils many a chest
Thou see'st—I've more, and heavier, still.

Thou didst but now ascend the throne:
Already wealth and power are seen,
And intellect, thy rights to own,
And do thee homage, as their queen.

And thine is all I ever prized.
With toil, I gained and held my store;
And precious was it in my eyes,
Though now it seems so mean and poor.

Digitized by Google

Valueless all that I possess,
As grass that scorching sunbeams burn.
Oh, with thy kindly glances bless!
More than their value thou'lt return.

FAUST.

Withdraw at once that boldly gathered hoard!
Uncensured, but, assuredly, unrewarded.
Is not this city, and its wealth, her own?
To offer individual tribute's idle.
Let treasure on costly treasure be arranged!
Let startling splendour be at once called forth!
Be our halls like a glittering paradise,
Like the gorgeous show of new-discovered heavens!
Haste, let fresh flowers be strewed before her footsteps;
And, softer than the velvet turf, let carpets
On gorgeous carpets be unrolled for her—
The goddess, that hath deigned to visit earth!

LYNCEUS.

A light and pleasing duty
The monarch doth enjoin.
Our hearts, resplendent beauty!
Our lives, our all are thine.

Our hosts are all aflame,
Even now, to prove their zeal;
The strong, the weak—oh, haughty dame!
Young, old, thy advent hail.

Digitized by Google

Even the sun's magnificence,
To thine, is cold and dim:
Before thy splendid countenance,
All base and worthless seem.

[*Exit.*

HELENA (*to Faust*).

I fain would speak to thee: ascend, I pray,
And sit beside me, for this vacant place
Calls *thee* its master, and secures *me* mine.

FAUST.

May't please thee, high-born lady! let me first,
Thus kneeling, dedicate myself to thee.
Oh, let me kiss the hand that deigns to upraise me!
Deign to confirm me thy associate regent,
That boundless realms and treasures I may win thee:
Thy adorer, guardian, servant, all in one!

HELENA.

I observe four-fold wonders: I hear what
Surprizes me, and excites my curiosity:
I wish for information, how it is,
That, in that speech, sounding so strange, yet friendly,
The tones appear the echoes of each other,
So that, whilst one word still rings within the ear,
Another joins it, like a faithful lover.

FAUST.

Doth our people's mode of speaking please thine ear?

Digitized by Google

Oh, far more, surely, will their songs delight thee!
They charm the sense, they sink into the soul.
The best way is, each to respond to other;
Recitative, that's styled: adopt it, lady.

HELENA.

'Tis beautiful! instruct me in the art.

FAUST.

Readily! let thy prompter be the heart.
When burning strong desires his bosom move,
Man looks around, and asks—

HELENA.

A being to love.

FAUST.

Then looks the soul nor forward nor behind:
In her loved presence, only—

HELENA.

Joy you find.

FAUST.

She crowns the present; she the pledge doth stand
Of future bliss: what assures *me* such?

HELENA.

My hand.

CHORUS.

Oh, fondest hopes exceeding!
The lords of this proud city
Friendliest reception give.

Digitized by Google

For we, assembled here,
Unconscious how,
Have sad captivity endured,
Through all our labyrinthine sorrow-course,
Since Ilium's destruction.
As the judge, and not as the electress,
Woman endures man's love;
For, as Occasion willeth,
Full power, impartially, doth he confer,
O'er her gracefully-rounded form,
Now, to shepherds with gold ringlets,
Now to rude grisly fawns.

Lo! they draw nearer;
On each other they recline;
Knee touches knee,
Breasts, joining, throb in unison;
Each clasps the other's hand,
On the swelling cushions, seated,
Of the magnificent throne.
Love's pure and secret bliss,
Not even to Majesty's denied;
Though, through becoming pride,
From the vulgar gaze 'tis shrouded.

HELENA.

I feel so strange, and yet, so much at home;

Digitized by Google

So distant, yet so near! whence, where, have I come?

FAUST.

I scarce can gasp—scarce speak—for trembling joy!
Is't a dream, that doth both time and place destroy?

HELENA.

Thou dear unknown one! thus embraced by thee,
I seem, at once, dead and new-born to be.

FAUST.

Do not your mind with such nice problems weary:
Being has duties—may be momentary.

PHORCYAS (*eagerly rushing in*).

In love's mere horn-book taking lessons!
Squand'ring time in idle toyings,
Sophistry, and fond caressings!
Is this a time for such enjoyings?
Perceive ye not the hollow thunder?
Nor the trumpets, braying yonder?
'Tis Menelaus, with his army,
Thus advancing to uncharm ye;
And I've hastened here to warn ye.
Hark! that trump to combat sounded.
Up! or, as captives, be surrounded.
These females, if ye loiter thus,
Will be served as was Deiphobus.
Up! for a fairer, if ye falter,
Gleams the keen axe on the altar.

Digitized by Google

FAUST.

Audacious interruption! Suddenly, threat'ning,
Like a storm-cloud they advance! What then?
However imminent the danger, I
Act never with blind rashness. Oh! how ugly
Looks the fairest herald of ill-boding news!
Yet thou, in thyself the ugliest of all beings,
Rejoicest to be bearer of bad tidings.
But thy alarm, this time at least, will result
In nought but a vehement shock to the empty air.
Here lurks no danger: and, if such approach,
It can but take the form of empty menace.

[*Explosive signals from the towers; trumpets and cornets; a mighty army advancing to the sound of martial music.*

FAUST.

What host can be mustered, that dare
With our chivalrous band to contend?
'Tis they, alone, merit the smiles of the fair,
Who, from insult, the fair can defend.

[*To the commander-in-chief, who separates from the columns, and advances.*

The east's daring heroes 'tis yours
To lead on, and the bands of the north.
Confiding in victory, victory ensures·
With calm earnest purpose, lead forth

Digitized by Google

Bright chivalry's steel-harnessed knights,
Whom none, hitherto, have withstood:
Whose tramp like the shock of an earthquake affrights;
Who charge—and a realm is subdued.

At Pylos we first leapt on shore,
And dispersed were the masterless horde—
As the wild deer-herd flies, if the lion but roar—
That once called old Nestor its lord.

So, back to his old calling driven—
To wander and rob on the sea,
Or, to lurk for his prey in some rock-concealed haven—
From these walls, Menelaus must be.

Your liege-lady, and Sparta's queen, hail!
And swear her just cause to maintain.
Go forth, in her name subdue mountain and vale,
And yours be the spoils and domain.

Corinth, girded by rampart and wall,
I direct that the Goth should besiege;
And, after, Achaia's hundred vales, all,
Must be seized on, our cousin and liege.

Before Elis, the Frank will appear;
Messene, the Saxon will claim;
The brave Norman's galleys the ocean will clear,
And Argolis hold, in her name.

Digitized by Google

Thenceforth, ye shall make THESE your home,
And *beyond them* your fierce weapons wield;
Yet Sparta must still be the paramount throne,
To its queen your just tributes to yield.

These lands she allows ye to share:
She reserves but the homage that's meet.
In her name, full possession I grant to ye—swear
True allegiance, for aye, at her feet!

[*Faust descends from the throne; the princes advance nearer, and form a circle around him, to hear him.*

CHORUS.

Who the most beautiful seeketh to possess,
Before all things, wisely gathers
Protectors round him,
Making his cause their own,
By flattery and reward:
For, what is prized beyond
All rarest earth-gifts, else,
He may not safely keep;
Or, the sly seducer lures,
Or the bold robber snatches her away.

Therefore, our sovereign, laud I,
Who his most valued treasure first secures.
Valiant and wise:

Digitized by Google

How sways he, to his purpose,
The mightiest of his heroes!
Faithful and true, to execute his will,
In silent expectation,
Obediently, they stand,
Awaiting his commands.
'Tis his to plan and praise;
Theirs, to perform; and both
Enjoy the glory earned.

Who, now, can snatch the queen
From her powerful lord away?
Collected here, doubly secure we feel:
By strong walls circled round;
And *they*,
By a mighty host environed.

FAUST.

Onward, all lordly hearts throbbing for glory!
Circled by you, in the midst we remain.
Lo, a magnificent prize is before ye!
Portions, for all, of that fertile domain.

That land, of all lands which the circling sun shines on,
Most beauteous, most blest by his joy-giving beam:
Where pleasure's immortal, nor in sorrow repines one;
That land of her childhood possess for your queen.

Digitized by Google

The glad waves flow onward, with murm'ring devotion,
Where Europe's last hills stretch their arms round the main,
And gird, like a love-knot whose bow is the ocean,
The fertile expanse of that beautiful plain.

There, forth the maternal egg stepping, that broke as—
To dazzle the world with their beauty and grace—
On the sedge-girded banks of the kingly Eurotas,
The sisters emerged from their god-impregn'd case.

Oh, lady! thy fatherland joyously enter:
The favoured domain that shall own itself thine—
The birth-spot where all thy affections may centre—
Before thee expands in its blossoming prime.

Each craggy height, pierc'd by the sun's glowing arrows,
The hardy goat climbs, the scant herbage to crop;
For, even where the mountain peak, midst the sky, narrows,
Bright patches of verdure ascend to the top.

Fountains forth gushing, stream with blending stream rushing,
Robe uplands and valleys in cheerfullest green;
And where the plains, rounding, are an hundred hills bounding,
Rejoicing hosts, onward advancing, are seen.

Digitized by Google

From dry spacious caves, at their bases extending—
And where ample shelter for all may be found—
With slow measured step, up the hill-paths, are wending
Horned herds, that disperse o'er the pasture slopes round.

And Pan is their herdsman: lo, yonder he's lying!
And beautiful nymphs in those chambered cliffs hide,
Where, crowding the summit, pine with stately pine vieing,
To ascend through the blue ether ardently strive.

Old forests are there, too, where, proud and unbending,
The oak's rugged branches capriciously spread;
There, too, pregnant with sweet juice, the maple, ascending,
Uplifts, from the green plain, its flourishing head;

And motherly, there, in its calm circling shadow,
For the lamb and the child doth the secret milk flow;
Honey drops, there, from many an aged trunk's hollow;
There, all fair fruits, man's first food, abundantly grow.

And joy, as an heritage, every one gaineth;
And cheeks glow with pure health, and hearts wax not old;
And each happy soul in his station remaineth,
Unenvious, unanxious, enjoying, and bold.

Digitized by Google

In the golden age, thus, did the strength of the father
Develope itself in the beautiful child;
And, astonished, we still ask if mortals, or rather
If gods, these old earth-lords more fitly are styled?

'Twas thus, 'mongst the shepherds, Apollo arising,
But resembled the noblest and brightest, in fact;
For all ages, all realms, we find Nature comprising,
In her own purer circle, whene'er she doth act.

[*He seats himself beside her.*

For thee, and for me, is love's fairest wreath blended:
Away with all thought of the things that decay!
Oh! bethink, that from Zeus himself thou art descended,
And belong'st to the ancient world's lovelier day.

Thy beauty no strong-walled town may imprison,
But still, in eternal youth, round earth career!
Oh, joyfullest fate that on me could have risen!
Arcadia, to Lacedemonia so near.

To this holy region, in happiest hour,
Thou escapest, where no cares shall ever annoy.
Now, the throne is exchanged for the love-breathing
bower:
Unrestrained and Arcadian-like, then, be our joy.

The scene becomes altogether changed; impervious bowers are formed along a range of rock-caverns;

Digitized by Google

shady groves encircle the rocky ascents up to these Faust and Helen are no longer visible; the Chorus lie dispersed around, in slumber.

PHORCYAS.

What length of time the maids have slept, I know not;
Or, if allowed to dream, what, plain and clear,
My eyes perceived. Be that as't may, I'll rouse them:
They'll be astonished. Ye, too, bearded elders!
That wait below, will be astonished, too,
At the development of this strange wonder.—
Up, up, and shake your locks! and, from your eyes,
Drive slumber! Up! and list to me.

CHORUS.

Pronounce, explain! declare to us what has chanced!
Fain would we find confirmed what yet we scarce
Believe, having waited by these rocks so long.

PHORCYAS.

What, are ye weary still? ye'll rub your eyes out, children!
Within these caves and bowers, ye are to understand,
Impervious shelter, in the Idyll's pastoral fashion,
Was granted to the loving pair, our gracious lord and lady!

CHORUS.

There! within that shade?

Digitized by Google

PHORCYAS.

Even there—apart from the world,
Myself the sole assistant, to mature their most earnest purpose—
There, honoured as a trusty friend, I stood beside them:
But I have since looked round in vain for somewhat else—
That *had* existence, most assuredly—and yet,
Despite my great experience and activity,
I've fruitlessly searched, amongst root-fangs, moss, and hollows:
So, 'twould seem, they are still alone.

CHORUS.

Dost thou pretend that the space of a world is encompassed by this screen—
Forest and plain, hill, dale, stream, lake? What fable art spreading?

PHORCYAS.

Doubtless, to your inexperience, these are unsearchable depths; but
Halls beyond spacious halls, palaces, gardens, and lawns, I could trace, through
Fancy's creative power.
There, I once heard a laugh burst forth, that rang through the vaulted aisles!
I gazed: from lady to lord, from sire to mother, was bounding
A spirited boy, amidst shouts and shrieks, and raill'ry, and gleesome sport:

Digitized by Google

The fondling nonsense half stunned me.
A naked wingless genius, as light, but without the fawn's animality,
From the firm ground he sprang; from the ground such impulse derived he,
That, at the third rapid bound, he had scaled the loftiest summit,
And stood on the airy height!
Anxiously calls out the mother, then, 'Bound high and oft as thou wilt; but
Try not to fly, for wings, to cleave the thin air, are denied thee.'
Anxiously, too, the sire: 'The force which is bearing thee upward
Lies in the ground: touch *that* with thy toe, as did earth-born Antæus,
And thy strength is at once renewed.'
On he vaults, from crag to crag, from one high peak to another,
And, like a tennis ball, o'er the circling hills is he bounding!
Now, down the cleft of the mountain-pass plunging, he's lost to our gaze:
The mother laments; the sire consoles her; I stand shrugging my shoulders.
Lo! he appears again! is some store-cave, yonder, concealed?

Digitized by Google

A flower-striped mantle he wears;
Tassels wave from his arms, and gay wreaths flutter around him;
Perfect ev'n as a lesser Phœbus, a golden lyre in his hand, he
On the most prominent peak exultingly springs, to astonish us.
Raptured, the parents gaze, and press to the heart one another.
Brightness encircles his head, but who could, with confidence, say if
'Twere from the crown derived, or the mind's self-radiant flame? and
Though but a boy, he assumes such graceful and firm self-possession
As bespeaks him the future master of glorious imaginings,
And of streams that eternally gush from harmony's fountain.
As such, ye must worship the wonder with most exclusive devotion.

CHORUS.

A wonder, call'st thou, that?
Offspring of Crete!
To the old poetic tale hast thou never listened?
Never of Ionians heard?
Never, even, of Hellas' godlike heroes,
Unto whom fame cleaveth,

Digitized by Google

Through the surpassing eloquence
Of the great lord of song?
In these obscurer days,
All, that may be accomplished,
Is but the faint sad echo
Of that old lordly age.
How poor thy narrative,
Compared to that exquisite fable,
More credible even than truth,
The son of Maia's tale.

Graceful and powerful, he—
Even whilst a new-born suckling,
Enshrined in purest down,
And swathed, by babbling and presumptuous nurses,
In strict elaborate folds
Of costliest purple—
His lithe but elastic limbs,
Did artfully withdraw,
Leaving the shell for them to wonder at:
Even as the finished butterfly,
From its rough chrysalis sliding,
Unfolds its fluttering wings,
And, warmed by the joyous sunshine,
Boldly through ether sails.

Nimblest of thievish vagabonds is he—

Digitized by Google

Promptest to seize advantage!
Through his quick ready sense,
He sways the demons, who are ever
At hand, his schemes to aid.
His trident, from the ruler of the seas;
From its sheath, the sword of Ares;
Smintheus' bow and quiver;
Hæphestion's tongs;
Yea, by its blasting flame unterrified,
Even great Zeus' lightning
His subtle skill purloined;
Eros he conquered at a wrestling match;
And Cypria, caressing him, was robbed,
Of the fragrant cestus
Girding her lovely waist.

A most exquisitely melodious and clear-toned stringed instrument sounds from out the cavern. All listen to what soon softens and subdues their hearts. There is a prolonged pause, through the whole of which the full-toned music continues.

PHORCYAS.

Listen, to sounds formed all hearts to please,
And away with such fabulous stuff!
Of that mob of old by-gone deities,
The world hath had more than enough.

Digitized by Google

There's none that will understand ye, now,
Far higher demands we exact;
That, alone, should appeal unto hearts, I trow,
That, *within* hearts, can live and act.

[*She proceeds towards the rocky caves.*

CHORUS.

Sounds this delicious music, pray,
Dread one! grateful in thine ears?
We, fresh waked to life and day,
Are dissolved in joyful tears.

Though the sun's glance disappear,
Light, upon our souls, doth rise:
Dawneth there, serene and clear,
Brighter light than gilds the skies.

HELENA. FAUST. EUPHORION.

(*In the costume previously described*).

To my childish sing-song listening,
How those dove-like eyes are glistening!
Your own childhood you live o'er.
As I dance to this old measure,
Bounds your heart with childish pleasure,
As 'twas wont in days of yore.

HELENA.

Kind love! on a favoured pair,
Thou didst breathe thy blessing, here:

Digitized by Google

Breathe, once more, with glow divine,
And *three* precious hearts entwine!

FAUST.

I am thine, and thou art mine!
All's accomplished, love's divine
Glow *can* accomplish; bound are we,
As others cannot, may not, be.

CHORUS.

In the lovely gentle boy,
Are garnered years of purest joy,
For that happy pair, and fond.
How it moves me—that blest bond!

EUPHORION.

Let me skip, let me bound,
Through the free air, around!
Higher and higher
To range, I desire!
Already, I'm seized on.

FAUST.

Oh, dearly-loved son,
Steady—more steady!
Don't be o'er heady!
Or misfortune and ruin,
Quickly ensuing,
Will be your undoing.

Digitized by Google

EUPHORION.

Constrained I'll not be,
Leave my hands free!
Pray, do not clasp so—
Nor my robe grasp so!—
Here I'll not linger:
Each rosy finger
Pray disentwine,
From those ringlets of mine!

HELENA.

Oh, do not bereave us,
Whose treasure thou art!
Oh, think how 'twill grieve us,
If thou should'st depart!
Thus to desert, will
Love's blest bond destroy:
Oh, break not love's circle,
My beautiful boy!

CHORUS.

Not long will remain, the
Fond union, I fear.

HELENA AND FAUST.

Oh, restrain! oh restrain ye,
Such headlong career!
For love of thy parents,
Life's exuberance restrain,

Digitized by Google

In peaceful forbearance,
To brighten this plain.

EUPHORION.

To please your fond doting,
I'll keep within sight—
[*Winding himself through the Chorus, and enticing them to dance*].
See, how lightly I'm floating,
Your eyes to delight.
Doth this measure suit ye?
Have these movements grace?

HELENA.

Oh, still lead on beauty!
Still, the mystic dance trace!

FAUST.

I would it were over,
I needs must confess;
I cannot discover
The merit of this.

EUPHORION AND CHORUS,

(*Dancing and singing, as they move in interweaving figures.*)

Gracefully throwing
Thy arms, in the dance,
Thy lustrous hair flowing,
Like sunshine doth glance.

Digitized by Google

Earth scarcely pressing,
Thy light footsteps fall;
Intertwining, caressing,
The favourite of all,
Hither and thither,
Oh, loveliest child!
Gliding freely as ether,
All hearts thou 'st beguiled.

[*Pause.*

EUPHORION.

Light-footed roes,
Playful and shy,
You, let 's suppose,
And the swift hunter, *I*.

CHORUS.

In the swift chace, we
Are not thy match:
Be not o'er hasty,
O'er anxious to catch!
We but long to embrace thee,
And sweet kisses snatch.

EUPHORION.

I 'm off, at a swoop!
Through the wild wood, I go;
That over-fond troop,
Hath disgusted me so!

Digitized by Google

There's nothing but cloys,
There's nothing can please,
Save, such forced joys
As, struggling, I'll seize.

HELENA AND FAUST.

What a wanton! what wild riot!
Farewell hopes of peace and quiet!
Hark, the shrill notes of a horn,
Over vale and forest borne!
What disorder! hark, what shrieking!—

CHORUS (*rushing back alone*).

He, grown cold and strange, is;
He treats us with scorn.—
In yon wild wood he ranges,
Whence soundeth the horn.

EUPHORION,

(*bearing a young maiden in his arms*).

Lo! a vigorous fair one I bear to our dwelling,
And kiss, with wild rapture, her scorn-breathing lips;
To love's blest embraces my charmer compelling,
The forced joys I snatch will all others eclipse.

THE MAIDEN.

Free me! The courage and strength of a spirit,
I, too, in this covering, as thou dost, inherit:
Equal to thine, our self-will is, and we
Are not to be borne off so easily.

Digitized by Google

And thinkest thou, really, that I am thy prize?
On an arm of flesh is it, thy spirit relies?
Hold fast! to a cinder I'll scorch thee with flame,
And thou'lt find out who 't is plays the fool, in this game,
[*She bursts into flame and ascends.*
To the light yielding air,—the inflexible tomb,
Follow me! seize the bright traces! on, on!

EUPHORION,

(*shaking off the last flame-tongues*).

Forest and rock,
In too narrow bounds, lock;
Still youthful and vigorous, am I;
Free, the wind raves,
Free, roar the waves,
They are far, they'll enrapture, heard nigh.
[*He springs up still higher rocks.*

HELENA, FAUST, AND CHORUS.

Thou shakest us with terror, o'er daring boy!
Would'st thou excel the bounding chamois?

EUPHORION.

Higher and higher must I climb,
Wider and wider gaze.—
Now our whereabout I divine;
Now, my spirit surveys
The steadfast shores, and unstable sea,
Dovetailing interchangeably;

Digitized by Google

The thronging isles circling round it in glory:
I stand amidst Pelops' territory!

CHORUS.

Oh, darling! stay in this fair land:
We'll sing thee love's delicious measures;
By gentlest airs shalt thou be fanned;
All choice fruits shall spread their treasures;
Vines the sunlit slopes shall strew;
Peaceful hamlets, midst them, peep.
We will tend thee kind and true!
Loved one, to this fair home, keep!

EUPHORION.

Dream ye of peace's mild day?
Let those dream of it, who may;
War is the watchword! war!
Victory shouts, from afar.

CHORUS.

Who, in peace's golden times,
Would wish back war's ills and crimes?
That would be nor more nor less,
Than to banish happiness.

EUPHORION.

Who, lavish of blood,
In the battle's fierce shock,
Will stand—as they've stood—
And at wounds and death mock;

Digitized by Google

Each free dauntless spirit
Impatient to fight,
That doth ardour inherit,
Which pales not its light:
What this land affords,
In peril or peace,
Will belong to these lords;
And its future increase.

CHORUS.

No longer, even in our eyes,
A child—in armour, he doth rise!
Gleams the burnished brass and steel!
Burns for victory, now, his zeal!

EUPHORION.

Nor wall nor foaming wave
Restrains the free and brave!
Dauntless courage, deathless fame,
The sole walls that guard their name.

Would ye save from spoil your home?
Light-armed Amazons become;
And, each child that sees the light,
Train, to aid ye in the fight.

CHORUS.

Oh sacred poesy! resplendent star!
That shinest, with lustrous radiance, from afar!
Wide is the distance—growing wider ever—

Digitized by Google

That thy etherial source, from mortals, sever!
Yet still, intently gazing, thee,
Men, through far opening ether, see;
And, without keenest pleasure, never.

EUPHORION.

No more a child I appear;
I commence youth's impetuous career;
In shining arms, I rush on,
With the free, the bold, and the strong.
Yonder, the foe is before me;
I clear my own path to glory!

HELENA AND FAUST.

On thee, the vital air hath scarce blown,
On thee, the pure day hath scarcely shone,
Ere, with giddy steps, a wild race,
Thou would'st run thorough painful space.
So soon, do we, to thee, mere nothings seem?
Are affection's ties but an empty dream?

EUPHORION.

Hear ye not, sea-ward, the booming thunder
Zigzagging through the valleys, yonder,
As echo flings it, from side to side?
The rushing throng have ye not descried,
Advancing like gnat-swarms, like mustering waves,
Shouting, death! death!
With united breath,
For the victors, wreaths, for the vanquished, graves?

Digitized by Google

HELENA, FAUST, AND CHORUS.

Amazement—horror—misery!
Death is then thy destiny!

EUPHORION.

None may the future anticipate;
None may change the decrees of Fate;
So care and danger, I separate.

THE FORMER.

Wantonness and danger—
Alas, for the wild ranger!

EUPHORION.

Heavens!—expanding wings
Uplifting one midst the free air!
Thither, I must—I must repair!
'Tis my uncurbable spirit that springs.

He flings himself into the air—for a moment his garments bear him up—light radiates from his head, and a trail of light follows him.

CHORUS.

Icarus! Icarus!
Misery to us!

A most beautiful youth falls at the parents' feet, and a known form is supposed to be seen, yet the body vanishes immediately, the aureola mounting upwards

Digitized by Google

as a comet, and shining in the heavens; the vest, mantle, and lyre remaining on the ground.

HELENA AND FAUST.

Furious pain doth smother
Intense but brief delight.

EUPHORION'S VOICE,
(*out of the depths*).

Leave me not alone, mother!
In the realm of night. [*Pause.*

CHORUS (*a dirge*).

Alone!—ah, where thou dost abide,
We deem, again, thy shade to see!
From day's fair face, when thou didst hide,
Severed itself no heart, from thee.

Thine was a bright and troublous day;
High-gifted wast thou, fair and great!
Must we—scarce known, ere snatched away—
Lamenting, sing thy envied fate?

Oh! born, the heir of earthly joy,
Of high descent, and lordly sway,
In life's gay morning—lovely boy!
In blooming youth, thou'rt snatched away.

Thine was the frank and joyous spirit;
The glance, like day that all pervades;

Digitized by Google

The gift of song thou didst inherit;
The glowing love of fairest maids.

Yet, though affection cried: 'beware;'
And yearning beauty sighed: 'hold! hold!'
Thou rann'st, at once, into the snare,
Unchecked by laws and customs old.

Thy youthful errors, all, retrieved—
Through intellectual power and pride,—
Thou had'st at length true fame achieved;
But this, harsh Fate to thee denied.

To whom doth she permit such boon?
Vain question!—none, their toils to cheer,
May hope to pierce its mystic gloom.
Death reads her mandate o'er the bier.

But, bend in lowly grief no more.—
Weave strains to make the glad heart quiver!
Who gave and took what we deplore,
Hath formed its like, and will for ever.

[*A profound pause—distant music is heard.*

HELENA (*to Faust*).

Through me, too, is that old saw proved, whose truth may not be slighted,
That happiness and beauty, ne'er, are lastingly united.

Digitized by Google

The bond of life, the bond of love, they both are torn
together;
Bewailing both, I say—farewell! dearest, we now must sever.
Into thy arms, I throw myself once more, my life! my joy!
Persephone receives us both—me, and our darling boy.

[*She embraces Faust—the corporeal form escapes—the dress remains in his arms.*

PHORCYAS (*to Faust*).

Hold fast the portion of her that remains.
Grasp the robes firmly, do not leave them loose:
Demons, already—tugging at the corners—fast!
Fain would pluck them from thy circling arms—hold
The goddess, whose they were, exists no more:
And yet, thou didst embrace divinity;
And dost hold the inestimable record of it.
Grasp it! employ it! o'er all common ground,
Through the yielding and yet penetrating ether,
Long as thou can'st endure, swiftly and far, 'twill bear thee.—
Far—far from hence, once more, we shall see each other's faces.

[*Helen's garments, dissolving themselves into clouds, surround Faust, and uplift him and bear him onward.*

Digitized by Google

PHORCYAS *takes Euphorion's garments, mantle, and lyre from the earth, advances to the Proscenium, and speaks.*

Ever of eluding happiness in chace!—
The flame, assuredly, hath disappeared:
But I behold no sorrow darkening the world.
Poets enough remain to record our deeds;
And, thorough such conventional society,
As the age, for a while, may chance to tolerate,
To float them, as the food of envious slander.
And if I have not genius to confer,
At least, I can furnish its imposing robe.

[*She seats herself on the Proscenium beside a pillar.*

PANTHALIS.

Haste maidens! haste! we're freed from the spell of that Thessalian hag.
Spirit-compelling, much-confusing, jingling in the ear,
Sounding like drunken talk, yet saddening the innermost mind.
With eager speed, to join the queen, away to Hades, fly.
And be still her faithful, sole, immediate attendants.
We shall find her, at the throne of the inscrutable one.

CHORUS.

Queens may be cheerful wheresoe'er they go:
Even in Hades, they've exalted station;

Digitized by Google

With their proud equals, they,
And with Persephone,
Associate in most cordial confidence.
Whilst we—banished to Asphodel meadows,
Where poplars, in long rows,
Stretch through the cheerless pastures—
What life should *we* lead? what amusements have?
Like flitter mice, we should traverse the dark shades,
Spectral and unenjoying,
Whispering, dolefully piping.

CHORUS LEADER.

Who achieve no distinct names for themselves, to the elements belong,
And thus become ennobled: such your dooms—away!
but I am prompted,
By strong desire, to join the queen; it is not merit, alone,
That serves to individualize—constancy must support it.

ALL. [*Exit.*

The cheerful light of day must we surrender,
Real forms no more! we know, we feel, it is so!
But unto Hades, never
Will we, again, return.
Eternal, gracious, life-bestowing Nature
Hath endowed our forms with spirit: precious boon!
Of which, we claim to enjoy
The free and perfect use.

Digitized by Google

ONE PORTION OF THE CHORUS.

Our spirits, pervading the wide-spreading trees,
Shall their branches expand to the sun and the breeze;
And we'll call round the root-points, with low mystic
voice,
The nourishing life-juice, in which they rejoice;
And we'll coax the pure air,
To breathe health, through them, there;
And we'll breathe back our thanks, through their green
leafy hair.
In exuberant beauty, their bloom we'll expand;
And we'll blow their rich fragrance afar round the land;
And their gold fruit we'll ripen, and fling on the ground;
And so, grateful multitudes, thronging around,
Will bend—eat with zest—
And we shall be blest;
And, as the first gods were, with prayer, be addressed.

ANOTHER PORTION.

We'll dwell amidst these rocks and caves:
O'er the streamlet's crystal waves
Leaning now, to catch their tone—
Countless murmurs blent in one—
As they fret round root and stone;
And, now—stretched their banks along—
List to many a warbler's song;
Or the leafy rustling shiver

Digitized by Google

Of the aspens—trembling ever;
Or sighing sedge, or reedy flute;
In Pan's kingdom, nought so mute,
But makes music, at his call;
And we'll learn to mimic all.
Hark! heard ye his voice?
We're prepared—we rejoice!
He whispers, we whisper, he thunders, and, lo:
With vehement zeal,
To his loudest appeal,
From rock to rock bounding, like answer doth go.

A THIRD PORTION.

Sisters! we'll blend with the blending streams, and their moving spirits be,
Through their ever widening, deepening course, on to the mighty sea;
For lovely look the flowery slopes reflected in their tide,
And fair, the far-off hills and vales, through which their waters glide.
The cypress and all stately trees, upsoaring from the plains
'Midst the purple sky, shall own our care throughout their myriad veins;
Mandrakes, and all rare plants, we'll tend; and we will gently lead
The pure refreshing crystal through the garden and the mead.

Digitized by Google

Gently glide where it pleases ye! we will repair
To the furrow-scarred hills, by the propped vines made
green,
His toils and emotions to mark, through the year,
Where, cheerfully active, the vine-dresser's seen.
Now he hoes, now he trenches, now he prunes the wild
boughs;
And now, to the gods, prayeth he
That hallowed his labours may be,
And, chief, to the day-god he proffers his vows.

True servants of Bacchus—voluptuous boy!
See, 'neath the broad foliage, now idly recline,
Now the sunny heights wandering, with young fawns
to toy,
That plump joyous lord of the generous vine.
For the fair scene what cares he? his true inspiration
Doth come from the hoop-circled casks,
And the bloated skins, and the flasks,
That in cells, which no seasons affect, have their station.

And now all the gods—but bright Helius chief—
With moisture, with warmth, with pure ether, uprear
The plants—full as drunkards are tendril and leaf;
And now, plenty's horn rivalling, full clusters appear:

Digitized by Google

Baskets creak, then, pails rattle, and groans the heaped
wain,
As—to the huge vat, where crushed,
By the presser's strong feet, is the must
From the ripe juicy clusters—it wheels to the plain.

And now, Dionysos! is held thy great feast,
Where wild-bounding satyrs, with hoofs like the goat,
And prick-eared Silenus—untameable beast!
Trampling down customs and decency, gloat;
And though, senseless, one falls after t'other, undaunted
They swill more liquor and more,
Because—so abounding the store—
Every old hoarded skin, for the new must, is wanted.
[*The curtain falls.*

PHORCYAS *steps from the buskins, lays aside the mask and veil, and advances, as* MEPHISTOPHELES, *to comment, as far as it may be necessary, on the piece—by way of epilogue.*

Digitized by Google

ACT IV.

A HIGH MOUNTAIN.

Rude, bare, pointed, rocky peaks; a cloud approaches, and poises itself over them; it sinks on a projecting table summit, and unfolds itself.

FAUST (*steps forth*).

PROFOUNDEST solitude beneath me lies!
On this rock-throne, upheaved amidst the skies,
Musing, I come from out the chariot-cloud,
Which bore me, cradled in its vapoury shroud,
O'er land and sea, amidst serenest day.—
Slowly it leaves me; but, nor melts away,
Nor like dust is scattered: towards the east it wends—
A glowing mass, that attracts my earnest gaze.
It spreads; it changes; billow-like, it blends;
It moulds itself to form!—With what amaze
I see—'tis no deception—clear and strong,
Forms that resemble Juno, Leda, Helen,
Couches of sunlit splendour stretched along:

Digitized by Google

How mighty, how majestic, how excelling,
How goddess-like, how feminine, how fair!
Before my eyes they float, like a dream Elysian!—
Alas, how quickly disarranged! the vision,
Upraised, borne off, like distant ice-hills seems,
That catch, from the glowing day, some transient gleams.—
But a softer purer mist-belt floats, caressing,
Round me, the senses clearing and refreshing.
This, too, ascends, with many a fond delay,
Higher and higher, on its heavenward way.—
Massing itself, it assumes——Is't a bright dream,
That like youth's first, most blessed hope, doth seem,
When love, like Aurora, dawned upon the soul,
With the first fond tell-tale glance that 'scaped controul?
How doth that beauty of the spirit rise,
With unchanging form, serenely, 'midst the skies!
And the heart's earliest, most precious store,
I deemed secured within its inmost core,
The fast held, ever bright, the one sole treasure,
Draw after it!—my all of earthly pleasure.

A Seven-league Boot *strides up.*
Another *immediately follows.*
Mephistopheles *stands forth.*
The Boots *stride away quickly.*

Digitized by Google

MEPHISTOPHELES.

That's what I call striding along in style!—
But how cam'st thou here? what took thee in the head
To scramble up amongst these horrid peaks?
Cheerless, disordered, with dark gaping rifts!
I know them well: old acquaintances of mine
Are these—but in another situation—
For they once formed the rugged floor of hell.

FAUST.

Thy store of marvellous legends is exhaustless:
Found once again, thou deal'st them forth as of old.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

When heaven's Ruler—and I well know why—
Banished us, from the realms of air, to profoundest depths,—
Where glows an everlasting central fire,
Whence, all around, the fierce flames burst and spread,—
We found ourselves in far too bright and splendid,
And, at the same time, too compressed a place,
To suit our nature's comfort or convenience:
On every side was nought but continuous coughing.
How sultry 'twas, and how it stunk of brimstone!
But the fumes of this—being pent up, like ourselves—
Kept adding to its hoard of unused power,
Until the o'erstrained level crust of earth,
Through its exertions, 'gan to swell and crack,

Digitized by Google

And, at length, burst, with monstrous force, asunder.
Thus, what once formed the floor of hell became
Exalted to mountainous peaks; and hence
Is founded that most true and orthodox doctrine—
The undermost the uppermost shall become;
Whilst we, through the rending masses, thus escaped
The servile grave, and became the lords of air.—
A mystery, doubtless, long and closely kept,
And only to these later times revealed.

Ephesians, vi. 12.

FAUST.

The mountain mass preserves a haughty silence:
I demand not whence it came, nor for what purpose.—
In the way herself alone can clearly fathom,
Is this earth-ball modelled by the hand of Nature;
And thus the peaks, thus the declivities,
Thus rocks up-piled, and lofty mountain-ranges,
And lesser hills, down sloping to the plains,
Crowned by old forests, carpetted with verdure,
Nor wanting bubbling spring, nor leaping torrent,
Nor mazy river gliding to the sea,
Rejoicing, blend into one beauteous whole.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

It speaks for itself! 'tis clear, as the noonday sun,
That widely different was its structure once.
I was within it, when the abyss sent forth,

Digitized by Google

From its boiling bosom, the upstreaming flames.
Cast at wide distance were the mountain fragments,
As Moloch's hammer 'mongst the rocks resounded!
The strange and ponderous masses still astonish.—
Who ventures to explain such vast upheavings?
The philosopher? 'tis past his comprehension:
Here stand the rocks, and scoff at his researches;
His guesses have but covered him with shame.—
The faithful vulgar have the truest notions,
And remain with them satisfied and undisturbed;
In this was wisdom, from of old, matured:
It is a mystery through which Satan's honoured.
My pilgrim hobbles, on his crutch of faith,
From the Devil's rocks, over the Devil's bridge.

FAUST.

Most curious 'tis—most worthy observation—
The Devil's mode of contemplating nature.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

What do I go by? Nature as she is.—
'Tis a point of honour.—Did I not stand by?
We are to speak what the mass will understand:
Tumult, force, madness are the obvious omens!—
But, to come plainly to the point at once,
Doth nothing on our upper surface please thee?
Thou overlook'st, amidst unbounded space,
" The kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them."
Matthew, iv.

Digitized by Google

And most unreasonable though thou art,
Canst thou fix on nothing there that pleases thee?

FAUST.

A mighty object may attract me.—Guess!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

That's quickly done.—I've searched me out a capital,
Condensed within whose central labyrinths,
Is all the horrible burgher's business done;
Where waste and filth of all sorts are fermenting,
In crooked streets, and closely pent-in markets,
And rows of slaughter-houses, always full
Of stenches and activity, whereby
The fat roast meat is obtained for feasting on.
Then come the spacious squares, the broad highways,
Where people of distinction live and move;
And, past all this, where walls nor gateways bound,
Extensive suburbs, stretching wide and far.
There, do I glory in the rolling coaches;
In the noisy ceaseless traffic carrying on;
In the eternally-moving crowds, that glide,
From opposite directions, through each other;
In all the various freaks and dissipations
Of the swarming ant-hill; in the midst of which,
Whensoever I think proper to appear,
By shouting thousands I am duly honoured.

Digitized by Google

FAUST.

That cannot satisfy me—try again!
Man rejoices when the population multiplies;
He joys to be among his fellow beings,
To fashion and instruct them: what results?
Why, that he educates a set of rebels.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Then, of surpassing grandeur, I erect,
'Midst delightful scenes, a palace of delight,
Girt by the splendid garden's gay parterres,
And shady labyrinths, and green partitions,
Planned with exactest art; statues and fountains,
Designed and placed, with happiest taste, amidst them;
These, and the velvet lawns surrounding these,
To nature's wilder graces gliding imperceptibly;
Green knoll, and tangled dell, and ancient forest,
And rock, whence leaps fantastically down,
The torrent, sinking to a gentle stream,
That winds along, for miles, through pastoral vales;
There, too, with rustic elegance, have I
Erected cottages, in quiet nooks—
Secure, delicious trysting-places, where
Are snugly nestled beauty's choicest doves;
There, unmolested, countless hours to pass
With earth's selectest loveliest female forms.—
I use the plural, because—once for all—

Digitized by Google

'Tis in the plural that I think of beauty.

FAUST.

Mean, modern notions! Ah! Sardanapalus!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Who could form any notion what thou striv'st for?
Something sublime and daring, there's no doubt.
Thou hast been floating near the moon of late,
And caught the mania that attracts folks thither.

FAUST.

Sophistic trash! this earthly sphere, my home,
Doth offer space for more transcendent deeds.
Noble achievements may be here accomplished:
I feel an innate power for bolder purposes.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

And is renown the prize thou wouldst attain?
One may see thou comest of a race of heroes.

FAUST.

Dominion will I have, controlling power!
The reality is all: the fame is nothing.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Yet poets will not fail to make a point
Of handing down thy splendour to posterity,
That, through old follies, they may kindle new ones.

FAUST.

After all, thou offerest nothing that's worth offering.
But how should'st thou guess what the human mind
desires?

Digitized by Google

Thy anomalous, bitter, ill-conditioned nature—
What, of man's wants and wishes, can it know?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Then it does not chance to accord with your lordship's humour,
To confide in me the scope of your desires?

FAUST.

My eyes were attracted by the mighty sea:
It upraised one portion but to o'erwhelm another,
The which, so pressed on, overwhelmed the next;
Thus onward, till the wide and level shores
Were assaulted by wild uproar, unprovoked;
The which disgusted me, as the rude arrogance
Of an uncurb'd spirit, that assumed the right—
Through its empassioned agitated blood—
Of lawless empire, and thereby aroused
My outraged feelings to take part against it.
With impatient glance, I watched to see a change;
The waves, at length, were stayed, withdrawn, rolled back
From the pride-erected boundary; but the hour
Returned again, and with it, the devastation.

MEPHISTOPHELES,

(*ad spectatores*).

There's nothing new for me to learn, I find;
I've already known this fact thousands of years.

Digitized by Google

FAUST,

(*in an empassioned manner, continuing*).

Onward they swept—a countless host! combining
Their separate efforts, to one common end:
Sterile themselves, to extend sterility.
Now they upheave, they gather, they roll on,
Covering the wished-for tract—vile usurpation!
Wave after wave exerts an active power,
Then withdraws itself, and nothing is accomplished.
It haunts me with a feeling of despair!
Uncontrolled, objectless, elemental power!
There, my o'erflowing spirit seeks to spread;
There, would it struggle nobly, and subdue.

Yes, it is possible!—flowing onward thus,
As the waves do, with haughty confidence,
Yet every hillock bends them from their course;
But little height it needs to curb their pride,
But little depth to keep them within bounds.
Plan after plan, already, in perspective
Arises in my mind to fill that space:
Attain for me the great the costly pleasure—
From that shore, to ward off the imperious sea,
Its broad unstable boundaries to contract,
Whilst the ambitious waves, at distance striving,
Only uplift themselves o'er one another!

Digitized by Google

Step by step, would I investigate, myself,
The progress: that is my wish—the balance to establish!

Drums and military music advance from the distance, in front of the spectators, and on the right side.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

What light is that?—hear'st thou the distant drum?

FAUST.

Already more contention! It disgusts one—
It cannot please a single rational being.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Whether't be war or peace, a rational being
Will take the pains to extract its full advantage
From every circumstance as it arises,
And watch for, seize, the favourable moment:
There's now an opportunity—embrace it!

FAUST.

Don't bore me with your enigmatic stuff!
Plainly and briefly show me what good 'tis.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

My instinctive tact enables me to state,
The worthy emperor's in great perplexity.
Thou mind'st him surely? for, to help him on,
We placed in his hands a spurious show of wealth;
Whereby the whole world, whilst the juggle lasted,
Were his ready slaves for any venal purpose.

Digitized by Google

Those were young days with him upon the throne:
In the long run the scheme has proved a failure.
Ah! very well worth wishing for they are—
Power and enjoyment, both at the same time!

FAUST.

A monstrous error. He who would command,
Must find his pleasure only in commanding.
His breast must be the abode of mighty projects,
Yet what he willeth none may dare to guess,
Till he whispers in the ear of some trusted one:
When lo, 'tis done! and all the world's astonished.
Thus is he constantly the most exalted,
As the most worthy;—enjoyment vulgarizes.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

He is not so! his nature is enjoying:
And prevails, though anarchy despoils the rich;
Though the high and low are placed at deadly odds;
Though brothers oppose brothers to the utterance.
Castle against castle; city against city;
The commonalty 'gainst the nobility;
The bishop 'gainst his chapter and his flock:
Such is the state of things; all in confusion,
All in open and proclaimed hostility
With each, and each with all the rest.
Churches no more are sanctuaries 'gainst murder;
Even at the very portals of the city

Digitized by Google

The death-stroke smites the merchant or the pilgrim,
As, joyously, they hail its friendly shelter;
And such daring reaps no contemptible reward.
To live one must restrain—restraint is gone.

FAUST.

It went, it halted, fell, stood up again,
Then it tumbled o'er, then the clumsy mass rolled on.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

And this confusion no one dared rebuke,
All had the power, so all assumed authority;
The rudest had full swing, although the best,
At such a time, would need a powerful curb.
Rose the ablest then, in marshalled strength, and said:
A ruler's duty is to secure repose;
This emperor cannot, will not;—let's elect
A new one, who'll infuse new life and vigour
Through the realm; whilst, in security,
Each one, as in a fresh-created world,
Beneath the sway of equal laws shall dwell.

FAUST.

That soundeth very priest-like.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Well! from priests
It emanated. Their share of the advantage
Was also much the largest: they secured
All that is needful for the corpulent paunch.

Digitized by Google

The uproar grew more loud, and it was sanctified;
And our worthy emperor, whom we made so glad,
Prepareth here, perchance, for his last battle.

FAUST.

I pity him, he was so good and open.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Come, let's see to't, there's hope in this world yet:
Let us deliver him from this dangerous straight,
And by *one* struggle make a thousand hopeless.
Who can foresee what turn the dice may take?
And, if he has but luck, he's sure of vassals.

[*They cross over the central mountain range, and look down on the arrangements of the multitude in the vale: whence the sound of drums and warlike clamour ascends.*

MEPHISTOPHELES.

They've taken up a capital position:
When we join them, the victory is accomplished.

FAUST.

What's to be hoped for, or expected, there?
Deceit—the spells of magic—hollow show.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Stratagem planning slaughter, victory!
Now bring all thy resources into action;
And, meanwhile, keep in view thy purposed object.—

Digitized by Google

We secure to the emperor his throne and realm;
Then thou'lt kneel, and he'll grant to thee the boundless shores.

FAUST.

Already many a victory thou'st accomplished:
Now win, and add this to thy former laurels.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

No! thou must win it. This time, thou must be
The generalissimo, and give direction.

FAUST.

Doubtless 'twould be peculiarly appropriate,
To take command of what I understand not.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Leave thou the charge of all that to thy staff—
Then the field-marshal's sure to be quite right.
In war's confusion I've had long experience:
From when the primitive mountaineers forth sallied,
Arm'd only with the powers that Nature gave them,
By some common interest hastily collected,
Ere councils of war, or strategy, existed.

FAUST.

Whom see I yon? what weapons do they bear?
Hast thou to battle roused each mountaineer?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Not I: they come from Lord Peter Rood,
Who dearly loveth all that's good.

Digitized by Google

THE THREE MIGHTY ONES (*come forth*).

Samuel 2, xxiii. 8.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

These—though differing in years,
In garb and armour, too, no less—
Are, all, my old and boon compeers:
Enlist them, then, and onward press.
[*Ad spectatores*].
Now, in harness, helm, and spear,
Not a child but glories;
All, heartily, these ruffians cheer—
War's true allegories.

BULLY,

(*young, lightly armed, showily decorated*).

Who at me presumes to stare,
At him I clench my fist, and swear:
Turns he, then, to run, from fear?
Back, I drag him, by the hair.

GRASPALL,

(*manly, well armed, richly decorated*).

Spoil-less contests I decline—
Waste of manly strength, and time!
Bend your whole soul to seize rich prey,
Let follow, then, what follow may.

Digitized by Google

HOLDFAST,

(*aged, strongly armed, unadorned*).

Thereby, too, not much is won—
Scarcely captured ere 'tis gone,
In such wild and riotous joy
As life's vigour doth destroy.
To take is, doubtless, good and bold,
But far better 'tis to hold.
To the greybeard leave all this,
Then, no plunder will ye miss.

[*They descend, altogether, further down the mountain.*

ON THE PROMONTORY.

Trumpets and military music heard. The Emperor's tent is pitched.

EMPEROR, COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF, ATTENDANTS.

COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF.

THE resolution still appears to me
A judicious one: to this commodious vale,

Digitized by Google

Withdrawing, and concentrating our forces,
We choose our position and ensure success.

EMPEROR.

What the result will be, itself will show;
But this half flight, this giving way, disgusts me.

COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF.

Pray sire, observe the ground on our right flank—
Precisely what a warrior's wish would make it!
In front, a gradual rise; behind, inaccessible:
Their cavalry will not venture to approach
Our ranks, half-hid by the undulating ground,
That, at once, favours us and deceives the foe.

EMPEROR.

It but remains, that I bestow my praise;
Strong arm and manly heart may here have scope.

COMMANDER OF THE FORCES.

Here, on this central elevated plain,
Thou seest the legions ready for the battle.
Up through the morning vapours, how their lances
Gleam in the splendid sunshine! wrapped in mist,
The mighty squares advance, obscurely grand:
Beneath that canopy, thousands of fiery hearts
Are glowing for the battle. Thou canst not,
Whilst thus enveloped, mark their strength or equipment:
I rely on them the rebel force to scatter.

Digitized by Google

EMPEROR.

I have a fair view now, for the first time:
A host like this is worth a twofold number.

COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF.

On our left flank, I have nothing to observe:
The rocky ground is occupied by warriors—
Betwixt the craggy rifts their armour glances—
The different mountain passes to defend;
I calculate that, there, the enemy's strength
Will be broken and disordered, by surprize,
E'er the bloody work of the main fight begins.

EMPEROR.

Yonder, my treacherous kinsfolks are advancing:
My uncle, cousin, brother, as they're styled;
More and more favour shown, and power allowed,
The sceptre's force they weakened, and deprived
The throne of reverence; quarrelling with each other,
Next, they destroyed the empire; and, at last,
They unite, as rebels, to o'erturn my power.
Fluctuates the crowd, in an uncertain spirit,
Awhile—then rush they on, as the current sets.

COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF.

A faithful and experienced spy advances
Hastily, from the rocks; may it be well for him!

FIRST SPY.

All goes on smooth and prosperously;

Digitized by Google

Yet our cunning and courageous
Profession wins small favour.
Many a tribe are true,
And swear allegiance to thee;
Yet—the apology of idleness—
Internal broils and perils,
Threatening their homes, they urge.

EMPEROR.

Sordid self-defence forms the sole creed of selfishness;
Gratitude, duty, honour, have no place in't.
Cannot ye understand this simple truth:
A fire in your neighbour's house endangers yours?

COMMANDER OF THE FORCES.

A second comes: but he advances slowly,
With trembling limbs—an overwearied man.

SECOND SPY.

I come to announce
The mob's riotous doings:
Suddenly, unexpectedly,
A new emperor appears,
Unfurls rebellion's standard,
From the old prescriptive paths
Of duty, draws the crowd,
Who, like sheep following each other,
Rally around it.

EMPEROR.

A rival of my throne, have I to subdue?

Digitized by Google

For the first time, I feel myself an emperor!
At every feast, so splendid, so imperial,
That nought was wanting to complete its luxury,
To me, excitement, peril, was awanting,
To earn and give them zest. Now, throbs my heart,
As my subject knights' do, for the tournament!
Oh, had ye not from war my mind diverted,
My name had now been blazoned as a hero's!
I stood alone, a sealed fount was my bosom,
As when in yon fire realm I beheld myself,
And that free element pressed horribly upon me,
Whose show was terrific, but 'twas merely show:
Of fame and victory, I've confusedly dreamt;
I'll realize what 'tis frivolous to neglect.

THE HERALD *formally prepares to go forth and challenge the rival Emperor.*

FAUST, *in armour, with half-closed helmet.*

THE THREE MIGHTY ONES, *armed and clothed as previously described.*

FAUST.

We advance to offer, not obtrude, our services;
Providence led us hither, unobstructed.
Thou know'st the people of the hills, all skilled
In the nature of the country and rock-passes?

Digitized by Google

The spirits long since, from the fertile plains, expelled,
Have, in the mountainous district, much increased.
Through labyrinthine caverns, still they work,
Amongst the dense, rich, metalliferous vapours;
There digging, fluxing, separating, cleansing,
To pry into the future's their sole instinct:
With finely-fingered, spiritual power,
They produce transparent substances, and then,
In the crystal plane, amidst eternal silence,
They perceive what comes to pass in the upper world.

EMPEROR.

I have witnessed it myself, and I believe thee;
But, valiant man, say on: finish thy embassy.

FAUST.

The Necromancer from the north, the Sabine,
Is most faithful—is, by honour, bound to one
Who that former horrid destiny escaped;
Already, the brushwood crackled; already,
Were flame-tongues everywhere protruding forth,
Circled by billets of dry wood, 'mongst which,
Rods dipped in pitch and brimstone were inserted;
Nor men, nor gods, nor demons could have saved:
Majesty burst the glowing bonds asunder!
Yonder—in Rome—that chanced. A sacred duty,
He hath held it, since, over thy fate to watch:
From that moment, all unmindful of himself,

Digitized by Google

On thy account alone, the stars, the depths,
Were by him questioned. With most urgent speed,
He dispatched us to stand by thee. Great the power
Of mountains! There, with preponderating might,
Free Nature acts, rebuking priestcraft's juggles.

EMPEROR.

At the rejoicing festival, when we
Joyously greet the joyous guests assembled
In crowds that make the spacious hall seem petty,
The brave must ever be most proudly welcomed,
Who, at the morning hour, bring prompt assistance,
Whilst, trembling dubiously, fate's balance hangs;
Who hither come at the most important moment
With strong heart backing the obedient sword:
Most honoured moment! when, on either side,
Hosts rush to combat. But I'll meet, myself,
The pretender, if he's personally worthy:
If it is not a mere phantom that opposes us—
Styling himself emperor, chief of the feudal bands,
Liege-lord of all our realms and greatness—
I'll strike him back, myself, to the realms of darkness.

FAUST.

Thou hast other and higher duties to perform;
Thou dost not well, to risk thy person so:
Is not the helm with crest and tuft adorned?
It defends the head, wild valour runs away with.

Digitized by Google

Without the head, of what service are the limbs?
Is that drowsy? they all sink into repose;
Is that hurt? all suffer corresponding injury;
Recovers it? at once they recover too:
Promptly, the arm its strong might exercises—
The shield uplifting to ward off the danger;
Promptly, the sword fulfils its duty then,
Dealing its keen and vengeful deathstrokes round;
The firm foot, too, takes part in the fierce strife,
Planting itself on the o'erthrown victim's neck.

EMPEROR.

Such is my wrath; so would I deal with him;
That haughty head, my footstool would I make!

HERALD (*returning*).

Little of honour, little of advantage,
Yonder, have we enjoyed!
Our royal proclamation,
They laughed at, as a ruse!
'Your emperor is defunct—'
Echoes yon narrow vale—
'When we enquire for him,
'Fable respondeth—
'Once on a time, he was.'

FAUST.

This hath ended as thy staunchest friends could wish,
Who, firm and true, have rallied round thy standard:

Digitized by Google

The foe is close at hand, thy host impatiently
Demand to charge!—the moment is auspicious.

EMPEROR.

To this commander I depute my power.
[*To the General-in-chief,*]
Chieftain! to thy hands I commit my cause.

COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF.

Let the right wing advance:—Onward!
The enemies left—now climbing the ascent—
Ere they reach it, shall submit to the young bands,
Who, their loyalty and valour, now first prove.

FAUST.

Then grant permission to this active hero,
At once, to take his station midst that phalanx:
He will infuse his spirit through their ranks,
And make them feel one fierce united impulse.
[*He points to the one on the right.*

BULLY (*steps forward*).

Who dares to face me boldly, I'll hew down,
And hack to pieces; and who turns his back,
Alike, with dangling head, and gaping throat,
And proud plumes soiled with dust, shall gory lie.
Then, stirred by my example, will your men,
With hot blood, rage like bloodhounds, to destroy.
Then will the enemy, in tumultuous panic
Flying, be smothered in each other's blood. [*Exit.*

Digitized by Google

COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF.

Let the central phalanx gradually advance,
To fall on the wavering enemy, and o'erwhelm them!
Let a few also, on the right, be ready!
The more to embarrass them, when wholly broken.

FAUST (*pointing to the central one*).

Let this one, then, enforce thy last command.

GRASPALL (*comes forward*).

The hero's courage and the thirst for booty
Shall unite themselves in the imperial host.
The rival emperor's splendid tent will be
The rallying point of all our daring energies.
Not long he'll boast possession of his seat:
I will lead, myself, the phalanx on that point.

COURIER,

(*A female Suttler embraces him coaxingly*).

Am I not also, then, allowed to follow
The single precious darling that is left me?
What a ripe harvest for our sickle yonder!
Woman's a fury, when she grasps at aught;—
Has no forbearance, when allowed to plunder.
On to the conquest! all is licensed there.

[*Exit both.*

COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF.

Their right, upon our left, furiously rushes!
A bold commencement! man with man engages,

Digitized by Google

The narrow pass between the rocks, to force!

FAUST (*signing to the one on the left*).

General! I venture further to remark,
However strong, that added strength's no harm.

HOLDFAST (*comes forward*).

Of the left wing take no thought: where I am present,
Possession is secure; what the ancient grasps,
The lightning's keen shaft would not sever from him.

MEPHISTOPHELES, [*Exit.*

(*coming down from above*).

Now, to the back-ground turn your eyes, and see,
From every gorge, amidst the pointed rocks,
Armed legions rushing forth! a living wall,
Now, at our backs they form! with helm and harness,
With sword and shield, they await but the sign to act.

[*Whispering to the initiated.*]

You must ask no questions from whence these have come.
There stands the armoury, all alive and merry!
I've lost no time, that's certain—there they are,
On foot, on horse-back, looking as if, still,
They might be the lords o' the earth! and once, perchance,
Knights, kings, and emperors, they may have been:
But now they are no more than empty snail-shells.
A host of spectral forms, of the middle ages,

Digitized by Google

Have dressed themselves therein, and thus advance.
What a host of minor devils, also, throng
To join the melée!—it will serve a present purpose.

[*Aloud.*]

Beforehand, how they stimulate each other!
How rings their plated armour, as they close!
How the forked pennons flutter round the standards,
A fresher breeze, impatiently awaiting!
Consider: here's an ancient host prepared
To mix, with pleasure, in this newer contest.

[*Loud formidable sounds of the trumpets from above—an obvious wavering in the hostile army.*

FAUST.

The horizon is obscured: all's indistinct,
Save, where partially gleams a red and ominous lustre!
Save, where the bloody weapons fitfully glance!
Rock, plain, and forest, earth and heaven, are blent
In one continuous cloud of dust and vapour.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

The right flank holds its ground bravely and firmly:
And I perceive too, 'neath the dusky pall,
Sir Raufebold, the young and active giant,
Exerting all his prowess most effectively.

EMPEROR.

I see an arm uplifted—and anon—

Digitized by Google

A dozen are dispatched, or shriek for mercy!
It almost seems like superhuman power.

FAUST.

Hast thou never seen a fog-belt rise, and float,
'Midst the morning light, o'er the Sicilian strand?
There, lifted in mid-air, disjointed cities,
Towers down toppling, plains and trees reversed,
Are seen, as figure after figure starts,
Forth the strange vapour, like a new creation.

EMPEROR.

How doubtful, still, doth the result appear!
The bristling spears start up from every point!
I see the dancing gleam of each polished lance
In our host—they appear upborne by spirits.

FAUST.

Your pardon, mighty emperor: those are the vestiges
Of defunct spiritual beings—reflected light
From the Dioscuri, by whom seamen swear—
On that battle field, their latest strength is mustered.

EMPEROR.

But say, to whom are we obliged? who hath caused
Nature to summon such a force to our aid?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

To whom but the master? to uphold and strengthen
Those, on whose valour thy destiny depends:
Uproused from the depths by thy enemy's strong
threats,

Digitized by Google

His gratitude willeth that thou should'st be saved,
Even if he should perish in the effort.

EMPEROR.

An emulous delight was felt, by all,
To surround, and bear me on, 'midst pomp and splendour:
I grasped, essayed, enjoyed, as whim suggested,
Turning from greybeard thought and toils of state.
I have a mind corrupted by the priesthood,
Though, assuredly, I've not secured their favour.
And now the effect of all these pleasant doings,
After so many years, shall I experience?

FAUST.

And enjoy the luxury of free-hearted kindness.
But pray, look up: it seems to me, he sends
A token—pray observe: it displays itself.

EMPEROR.

An eagle, soaring up amidst high heaven,
And a griffin, wildly menacing, pursues him!

FAUST.

Pray, sire, attend: the omen is auspicious:
The griffin is a fabulous animal,
And how can he so far forget his station
As presumptuously to cope with the lordly eagle?

EMPEROR.

In far extended circles, now, they sweep!—
Now, suddenly, they pounce upon each other,

Digitized by Google

Breast buffetting 'gainst breast, and necks stretched forth
To tear each other piecemeal.

FAUST.

Aye! Now, mark how that hateful griffin worries
And tears away, but only worsens *himself*:—
Now, with his lion's tail between his legs,
He hurries off, and vanishes in the forest.

EMPEROR.

As is the interpretation of the omen
At which I marvel: so be the result!

MEPHISTOPHELES (*towards the right side*).

Broke by repeated shocks, the foe *must* give way,
Harrassed from unseen, undreamt of, ambuscades!
The right presses on, to maintain the uncertain fight;
The left—their main dependence—gets confused;
Our right's unbroken force, at a glance, perceive
Their state, and rush to seize the advantage.
Like storm-urged waves, from opposite directions
They advance! they close! with intermingling shock,
Like adverse tides, in deadly strife they rage!
What a splendid sight!—the victory is decided.

EMPEROR (*on the left side, to Faust*).

Our strong posts yonder wear a dubious aspect;
I see no stones fly; the lower rocks are scaled—
The higher abandoned; masses of the enemy

Digitized by Google

Are pressing rapidly on—they gain the pass—
Unhallowed conflict rages—your art fails! [*Pause.*

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Lo, there come both my ravens! what news bring they?
I begin to fear the battle goes against us.

EMPEROR.

What mean those hateful birds, that I see coming
Hither, on black vans, from the rocks of strife?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Place yourselves, cousins, close to either ear.
The day's not lost to those whom ye take part with:
Profoundly just, consummate, is your counsel.

FAUST (*to the Emperor*).

Of course you've heard of doves, that, from far shores,
Will return to their birth place, and their own loved nest?
There's this important difference betwixt them:
The courier dove is the messenger of peace,
In war, the courier raven is required.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

A sad reverse is wafted us from thence,
Which bodes no good to our cliff-stationed heroes:
The nearer heights are scaled, and should they gain
The pass—why then, we're in a critical position.

EMPEROR.

And so then, after all, I am deceived!

Digitized by Google

Into a net ye've drawn me—I'm surrounded
By snares on all sides, that I plainly see.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Take heart! the game's by no means up with you—
Patience and artifice to the last extreme!
These, in the end, are usually successful.
I have my faithful messengers instructed,
And all I dare to order shall be done.

THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF,

(*who, in the mean time, has descended*).

Thou'st lent thine ear—to my extreme annoyance—
To these sorcerers, whose juggling hath produced
No real advantage. To turn the battle, now,
Is past my skill: they began, let them finish it—
I give back my baton.

EMPEROR.

Keep it for brighter hours:
Such, Fortune yet may have in store for us.
I shudder at that ugliest of all
Acquaintances, and his black raven friendship.
[*to Mephistopheles*].
I cannot put the staff into thy hand—
Thou seemest not a true man, in my eyes:
But take command, and use your utmost means—
Come what come may—to deliver us.

[*Retires into the tent with the Commander-in-chief.*

Digitized by Google

MEPHISTOPHELES.

May that stupid staff of his be his protection:
To us it could not be available,
Formed, as it is, from the true wood of the Cross.

FAUST.

Well, what's to be done now?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Is already done.—
Now my black worthy cousins! make dispatch:
Hie to the mighty mountain-lake, and greet,
In my name, the Undines; and bid them gather
The phantoms of the floods. By female art—
Most difficult to comprehend—they know,
The being, from the form, to separate,
So that all swear, the appearance is the substance.

[*Pause.*

FAUST.

The ravens must have coaxed the little water-ladies
From out their haunts: it 'gins to drizzle yonder.—
On many a dry and barren rock-crag, now,
Full springs gush forth, and tumble headlong down.
That victory will be accomplished yet.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

A most astounding salutation, that!
The boldest of the scramblers seem confused.

Digitized by Google

FAUST.

Already, streams, to mightier streams, unite
In winding and reduplicating courses;
One noble torrent—dashed on a broad flat rock,
And scattering wide around, like bright rays from a centre,
Its finely parted surge—creates a rainbow:
Then, gathering its host of water-drops once more,
It foams and thunders onwards to the vale.
Oh! what can save that most heroic race?
The mighty floods o'erwhelm, and sweep them off!
Even I shudder at so wild a tumult.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

I see nothing of these water-sprites, at all:
'T is, that men allow themselves to be deceived.
How much I am amused by the strange event!
Helter skelter, down they rush, in crowded lots,
Fancying—the foolish scarecrows—they 'll be drowned!
Even on firm land, they blow and snort, and think
To swim like creatures born to the element.
Now confusion reigns supreme through all the host.

The RAVENS *return again.*

To our great chief I shall mention ye with praise;
And, would ye worthy of your master prove?
Then, forthwith, speed ye to the glowing forge,
Where, never weary, the dwarf people beat

Digitized by Google

Sparks out of gems and metals. Their delight
Is to sit, socially gossipping, around
A sparkling roaring fire, and speculating
On the uses man's high mind might make of the element.
Surely lightning's glancing, and stars shooting, yonder!
Such from heav'n may gleam on every summer night;
Bnt lightning, amongst densely tangled brushwood,
And twinkling stars, upon the turfy ground,
Are things one does not meet with very often.
Ye must, without exerting o'ermuch labour,
In the first place, make entreaty, then command.

Exeunt THE RAVENS. *The above phenomena appear.*

The enemy is wrapped in solid darkness:
They pause—they stride on—in complete uncertainty;
Sparks suddenly flash, on all sides, to perplex them;
This is all capital; we want but sounds of terror.

FAUST.

The hollow arms, from that sepulchral hall,
Find themselves strengthened by the free pure air
Above them, yonder, how they ring and clatter!
How long they have sustained that well-feigned chorus!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

All right! they are to be restrained no longer:
Already valiant cudgel-strokes resound,
As in the good old time. Arms glitter;

Digitized by Google

Bones are splintering; as Guelphs and Ghibellines,
With promptness, their eternal strife renew,
Faithful to their inheritance of hatred.
The implacable tocsin soundeth loud and far!
At last, with all the rage and power of demons,
Doth party hatred work its mighty purpose,
Till all extremest horrors are accomplished.
Wildest uproar rules, tyrannic:
Hark! what shrieks, and sounds satanic:
All are flying, now, in panic.

[*Tumultuous warlike sounds in the orchestra, passing, at length, into cheerful military music.*

RIVAL EMPEROR'S TENT,

Wherein is his Throne and Treasures.

GRASPALL, COURIER.

COURIER.

AND so we are the first pair here!

GRASPALL.

No raven flies so swift through the air.

COURIER.

What heaps of splendid treasures, hey?
What is the best to bear away?

Digitized by Google

GRASPALL.

The whole place is so full, I'm curst
If I know what to grab at first.

COURIER.

This carpet would be my delight—
I'm often barely off at night.

GRASPALL.

There hangs a bright blade, wherewith I
Might hold out long and cheerfully.

COURIER.

The very gold-fringed robe, I swear,
That did in a dream to me appear!

GRASPALL (*unhanging armour*).

Come down here, thou old burnished case,
Whence man slays man, and takes his place.—
A deal of litter you have sacked,
But nothing that's convenient packed:
Leave ransacking the place, I say,
And carry this small chest away;
'Tis full of gold to pay the soldiers.
Quick, man! and take it on your shoulders.

COURIER.

Oh Lord! oh Lord! how wondrous heavy—
I cannot handle it, I tell ye.

GRASPALL.

Come, bend yourself! come, don't be slack!
I'll lift it, for you, on your back.

Digitized by Google

COURIER.

Oh! murder!—Oh! I'm done for, now—
You've broke the small of my back, I vow.

[*The chest falls, and springs open.*

GRASPALL.

There lies the red gold, in a lump:
Come, scrape it up! come—quick, man—jump.

COURIER (*squatting down*).

Shovel in—sweep in the rich store—
There's enough to last us evermore!

GRASPALL.

So—that's enough—your apron's full.—
Why, zounds, it has a hole, you fool.
The devil! that will never do—
Why, where you stand, 'tis dropping through!

ATTENDANTS (*our Emperor's*).

The emperor's tent how dare ye enter?
How dare ye, here to rummage, venture?

GRASPALL.

We risk our lives and limbs, for pay,
And the right to plunder as we may:
The enemy's tents are lawful booty—
I've a right to take as much as suits me.

ATTENDANTS.

That doctrine, friend, will never do:
What! act as thieves and soldiers too?

Digitized by Google

And all who for our emperor act
In battle, soldiers are, in fact.

GRASPALL.

The honesty, that ye profess,
Means contribution, I should guess.
We're all on equal footing, here:
My fellow-plunderers! what cheer?
[*To the Courier.*]
Bolt off with what we've grabbed—I'll spell—come!
It seems we make more free than welcome. [*Exit.*

FIRST ATTENDANT.

Why didst not knock that rascal down?

SECOND.

Of a sudden, all my strength seemed gone.
They looked like spectres, as they passed.

THIRD.

As on the pair my eyes were cast,
Over them seemed to come a haze.

FOURTH.

For the feeling, I have got no phrase;
But, the whole day, it seemed so hot—
So oppressive—so——I scarce know what!
At once, one groped along, and slew.—
I know not what may be the cause—
All *seemed* as if one looked through gauze.—
The battle went, one scarce knew how;

Digitized by Google

There was such buzzing in one's ear,
That what passed I know not, even now;
Nor how we managed to get here.

The EMPEROR, *with four* PRINCES, *enters. The Attendants withdraw.*

EMPEROR.

Well! be it as it may, the day is ours:
The enemy's strength is dissolved from the open plains.
Here then, by tapestry encircled, stands
The empty throne, and the rich hoards of treason.
Surrounded by our faithful lieges, here,
We'll receive the ambassadors, in regal state.
From every quarter, now, come pouring in
Loyal addresses of congratulation!
All is peace, and joy, and dutiful attachment.
If aught of the darker arts *did* blend in the strife—
We fought the battle out, at last, for ourselves.
Though the omens and contingencies that chanced,
Doubtless, worked for us, and against the enemy;
The bursting clouds rained blood, and showered stones on them;
The clash, as of armour, rang from the rocky hollows!
All stimulating us, the foe disheartening.
The vanquished fell, the victors' scorn increased;
Thenceforth, command nor stimulus was needed;
With exulting shout, they exclaimed, 'The Lord is with us!'

Digitized by Google

Lord God! we praise Thee! millions shout Thy praise!
But now, from pouring forth my grateful thoughts,
I turn them inwardly—not oft my wont
In bygone days: meet 'tis for haughty youth
To lavish time: years teach the use of moments.
Therefore it is, I confide, at once, to you—
Four princes worthy of the sacred trust—
The upholding of my power and dynasty.

[*To the first.*]

Prince! unto you justly belongs the praise
Of the soldier-like arrangement of the army:
In your plans, consummate judgement was displayed;
And, at the critical moment, prompt decision.
Now, doth the time demand more peaceful duties:
As Hereditary Marshal of the empire,
I instal ye, and bestow the sword of state.

GRAND MARSHAL.

Thy faithful army—until now, employed
Within the realm—when on the frontiers stationed;
When thy throne's secured, established thy authority;
Then, be it ours to guard thy sacred presence.
When, at high festivals, the spacious hall
Of thy ancestral castle shall be crowded,
Then—ever on my sovereign in attendance—
On his right hand I'll bear this polished weapon.

Digitized by Google

THE EMPEROR (*to the second*).

To thee, prince, not less valiant—and, withal,
Of captivating person and address—
The post of High Chamberlain do we confide,
And give thee authority o'er all our household—
No holiday charge, to execute aright.
Contention, ever, shows imperfect rule.
Be thine the noble conduct, that—appealed to
As an example—all the court shall laud.

HIGH CHAMBERLAIN.

The sovereign will to execute, is honour.
Encouraging worth, nor injuring even the bad;
Clear-eyed, not prying; mild, but not deceitful:
Such is the conduct I propose to adopt.
If my sovereign approves, I am content.
Dares fancy stretch itself to the great festivals,
In the ancient palace, yonder?—'Midst thy court,
The golden goblet 'twill be mine to offer—
To cheer thy heart, whilst thy glance cheereth mine.

EMPEROR.

Too serious is my present mood, to dwell
On festive thoughts: yet, be it as ye say;—
Our new arrangements *should* commence with spirit.

[*To the third.*]

Thee, I appoint Grand Sewer; and, from henceforth,
Of manors, chases, and preserves take charge:

Digitized by Google

And be the choicest viands carefully
Prepared, at all times, as the seasons change.

GRAND SEWER.

Strict fast shall be my grateful custom, till
The choicest dishes, daily, are prepared
To gratify thy taste, and placed before thee.
The domestics of the kitchen, each and all,
Shall assist my own zeal, to accelerate
The seasons, and bring distant luxuries near:
That the distant and the early should adorn
Thy table, doth befit imperial state—
Though they allure not thee, whose wiser taste
The simple and the nutritive prefers.

EMPEROR,

(*to the fourth*).

Whilst, as expediency requires, we make
Arrangements for our household rule, and feasts—
Let's, to our Butler, a young hero change!
Fill us the goblet! see the cellars stored,
Abundantly, with wines of choicest vintage!
But be ever temperate and serene, thyself!
Nor let facilities seduce to error.

CHIEF BUTLER.

My sovereign! youth itself, if one confides in't,
Supplies the cellar's place, till quite consumed.
I pledge myself, at each high festival,

Digitized by Google

A sideboard worthy thy imperial state:
Gorgeous and massive vessels of gold and silver.
Yet, I anticipate thy choice, and provide
The fairest of all goblets for thy use:
A crystal Venice glass, whose wondrous virtue—
Heightening the flavour of all choicest wines,
And protective from all danger that may lurk—
Oft to intemperance powerfully tempts;
But thy frugal habits are more powerful still.

EMPEROR.

For the trusts I now most graciously confide,
The imperial word is ample confirmation:
Yet, in the noble form of written deeds,
With the imperial signature attached,
'Tis meet they should, in due form, be recorded—
And lo! the right man comes, at the right time.

The ARCHBISHOP *enters.*

When once the arch to its key-stone is confided,
Then, for enduring ages, 'tis secure.—
Thou behold'st four princes, here, whom we've resolved
To advance to the highest, most immediate, trusts
Of our government, our household, and our court.
And now, to those the entire realm holds dearest,
Be, in the fifth place, power and privilege granted:
Of all else in the realm, must they take precedence.
Therefore, even now, o'er yon extended frontier—

Digitized by Google

An unexpected acquisition, won
By our victorious arms—o'er that fine tract,
Parcel of our hereditary lands,
I extend your high and sacred privileges:
Be the unmolested exercise decreed you
Of all it befits the sovereign to concede.
As judges, pass ye the decisive sentence—
Let there be no appeal from your tribunal.
Let tributes, rents, feudalities, services,
Customs, tolls, pasture, salt, and regal dues,
Pay contribution, as is just, to you.
Thus, my imperial gratitude to prove,
Next unto majesty have I upraised ye.

ARCHBISHOP.

In the name of all, profoundest thanks receive!
Thou makest us strong, and strengthenest thy own
might.

EMPEROR.

I purpose unto ye, exalted five,
To delegate still higher dignity.
I live and I enjoy existence now;
Yet, casting backward a considerate glance
O'er a long series of high ancestors,
I find the throne deprived of that support,
Through the rash conduct of my relatives.
Be't your duty, then, to name my successor,

Digitized by Google

And take him 'fore the altar, to be crowned.—
And so, let our stormy doings end in peace.

ARCH-CHANCELLOR.

Their haughtiness close folded in their bosoms—
With deep humility, do princes bow before thee!
So long as true blood pulseth through the veins,
We're engines moving at thy slightest will.

EMPEROR.

Finally: let our purpose be confirmed,
By written parchments, to all future time;
Fully and freely, hold ye in possession,
As rightful lords; but upon this condition,
That your inheritance be indivisible;
And also, as ye do augment the same,
That your eldest son possess all your possessions.

ARCH-CHANCELLOR.

Promptly and cheerfully, the all-important statute,
On parchment, shall be drawn with accuracy,
In clear and legible characters; and the seal
Duly prepared. When it issues from the chancery,
Thy imperial hand must ratify the deed.

EMPEROR.

And now ye are dismissed: let each and all
Be prepared for the great day of assembly.

[*The Temporal Princes withdraw; the Spiritual one remains, and speaks pathetically.*

Digitized by Google

The chancellor withdraws, the bishop tarries.
With what intense and bitter pain, I find
My consecrated sovereign leagued with Satan,
To secure him on the throne—as 'twould appear—
Alas! in contempt of God and his vicegerent!
His vengeance will be speedy, when 'tis known.
Thy realm, by sacred fire, will be destroyed.
Never, to utmost time, will be o'erlooked
The damage done the Christian name, through thee.
Blasted will be the glory of thy crown.
Strive with thy heart, and, from the unholy gain,
Concede a moderate part for pious purposes.
On the broad hill-side, where the forests stretch
Around the uplands, that green pasture clothes,
Gradually sloping to the sheltered plains, [issues
And broad lake stored with fish, from whence there
A gentle stream, that winds through grassy meadows;
Where evil spirits in thy defence engaged;
Where thy tent is planted: found and endow a church,
That repentance may be shown, and grace be found.

EMPEROR.

Remorse has seized me for my grievous sin:
It rests with thee, the boundaries to fix.

ARCHBISHOP.

The polluted spot first being consecrated,
And set apart for the service of the Almighty—

Digitized by Google

Behold, through zeal, the sacred walls uprise,
Where the sun's first rays shine on the matin choir!
See extend, on every side, the growing structure!
See, with awful joy, the faithful lift their eyes
To where the nave high arches, overhead!
See them rush, with ardour, through the sacred porch,
As, from heaven-aspiring towers, the bells first peal,
O'er vale and mountain, summoning to worship—
To penitence—to new-created life!
The day of high and solemn consecration
Will sanctify thy name to latest times.

EMPEROR.

May this great work proclaim the pious mind,
To God's praise, and my own purification!
I feel my spirit, already, lifted up.

ARCHBISHOP.

Like the chancellor, I request a formal deed.

EMPEROR.

A formal grant, ceding it to the Church?
Have it prepared, and I will sign it, cheerfully.

ARCHBISHOP,

(*after taking leave, turns back again*).

But, dedicate the work at the commencement:
Endow it with lands, tithes, rents, and dues, for ever;
There needeth much, to uphold it worthily.
And, to make expedition with the structure,

Digitized by Google

In such a waste as that, 'twill well beseem thee
To grant a sum out of the captured treasures;
As also labourers; for I ought to state,
That stone and lime and slate and wood, and such like,
Are distant. The conveyance, will the people undertake,
Gladly, when they are urged to it from the pulpit.
What ye yield the Church will bring a blessing on ye.

EMPEROR. [*Exit.*

The sin I've burdened myself with is great:
Those hateful spell-folks cause me heavy loss.

ARCHBISHOP,

(*once more returning, with profoundest reverence*).

Pardon, sire! It has become notorious
That the dominion of the shores is ceded,
Though they were under ban of Holy Church;
Therefore, with meet repentance, grant of these
The tenths and dues, rights and oblations also.

THE EMPEROR (*irritated*).

The land exists not yet—the sea flows o'er it.

ARCHBISHOP.

The time will come, for those who've right and patience:
Your word's effective power will endure.

EMPEROR (*alone*).

Thus might I, soon, the whole realm sign away.

Digitized by Google

ACT V.

AN OPEN TRACT.

WANDERER.

Yes! there the dusky lime-trees are—
Flourishing just the same;
And I—a wanderer long and far—
Behold them once again.

Yes! there it is—the same old spot—
Roof-tree, and walls, the same
As when, for shelter, to that cot,
A wave-drenched boy, I came.

Ah, might I greet the worthy pair,
So prompt to help me, when
I needed help!—How many a year
Hath rolled away since then.

Do they enjoy in comfort, yet,
The blessings they have earned?
I'll knock—I'll call!—To pay a debt
Of kindness, I'm returned.

Digitized by Google

BAUCIS,

(*a little woman, very old*).

Hush, stranger! hush! speak softly, pray:
More rest my good man needs.
More hours for sleep require the gray,
As fewer grow their deeds.

WANDERER.

And art thou the same matron, who,
With prompt and anxious care,
Did my fast-ebbing life renew?
Art thou Baucis? Oh! declare:
Is thy kind husband living, too,
My gratitude to share?

[*The spouse comes forward*].

Art thou Philemon, prompt and bold,
Who snatched from the waves my store?
Whose friendly bell hath often tolled,
To warn from the dangerous shore?

Whose beacon-fire, beheld from far,
In stormy nights ne'er failed?
Its radiance, like a friendly star,
Perplext adventurers hailed.

Now let me on, to feel its spray,
And gaze on the boundless ocean!

Digitized by Google

On its sounding strand let me kneel, and pray,
To still my full heart's emotion!
[*He moves onward to the denes.*

PHILEMON (*to Baucis*).

Come, quick, dame, quick! and spread the board
In our garden's gayest nook.
I'll after him: at the change, good Lord!
How astonished he will look. [*Follows him.*

[*Standing beside the wanderer*].

Here, once, ye saw wild furious seas,
At random, break and foam:
It hath changed to gardens, lawns, and trees—
Hath a paradise become.

I cannot lend a helping hand,
As I was wont to do:
But—like my strength—from this wild strand
The waves have vanished, too.

Toiling, as their wise lord did plan,
Serfs the free waves restrained;
And, what was Ocean's, that great man
Hath, for himself, obtained.

Lo! brightening in morn's early beams,
Wood, lawn, grove, village, spire.
The gray mists melt—how fair all gleams!
Look round—enjoy—admire!

Digitized by Google

Lo! now some vessel seeks the haven:
Hark, the distant signal—hark!
Thou know'st the snug nest of the raven?
Such, that port is to the bark.

Thus, thou behold'st the sea's blue border
In the distance; and around—
Where once was nought but wild disorder—
Broad, firm, and fertile ground.

IN THE LITTLE GARDEN.

The three seated at table.

BAUCIS (*to the stranger*).

You're dumb! you ask not about yonder
Doings: have you marked them well?

PHILEMON.

Yes: I have showed him all the wonder:
And you, how brought to pass, may tell.

BAUCIS.

Well! and a wonder 'thath become:
But my mind misgives me, I must say.
By no earthly hands the work was done:
'Tis wrong—'twill all be swept away.

Digitized by Google

PHILEMON.

How can that be? The emperor
Can do nought wrong, and he
Granted, himself, all the wild shore
Rolled o'er and left by the sea.

Did not a herald, marching round
The boundaries, proclaim
All this, amidst the trumpets' sound,
In our great emperor's name?

This finished—tents and huts were reared;
Work, night and day, went on;
A stately palace soon appeared:
Like magic, all was done.

BAUCIS.

In vain the workmen toiled, by day;
They made no show, I ween:
Night came, and small lights danced away—
Next morn, a dam was seen.

Once, human sacrifice, at night,
They made, with shriek and yell!
All seaward, glowed with fiery light:
Lo, at daylight, a canal!

That neighbour hath a haughty soul;
He's a godless man, to want

Digitized by Google

To have our cot and woody knoll—
Which, I'm resolved, he shan't.

PHILEMON.

But he hath offered us, my dear,
Some beautiful new ground.

BAUCIS.

Keep on the safe ground, where you are:
When the dykes go, you'd be drowned.

PHILEMON.

Well! to the chapel let's away—
Ere sinks the setting sun—
To thank our God for one more day,
And say, 'Thy will be done.'

PALACE.

An extensive ornamental Garden; a grand flight of steps leads to a Canal. FAUST, *in extreme old age, wandering, meditating.*

LYNCEUS THE WARDER (*through a speaking-trumpet*).

THE sun sets; the latest bark nears—
Will soon be safe moored in the haven;
A large shallop hitherward steers,

Digitized by Google

From her tall masts gay pennons are waving;
Resound, from her deck, hearty cheers;
With good news to greet thee, they're craving.

[*The bell sounds on the denes.*

FAUST (*arousing himself*).

Damned tones! degrading, ignominious sounds!
They wound me like a shot—like an adder's sting.
Before me, my domain appears unbounded;
But there, behind me, that infernal bell
Provokes my anger, by reminding me
That my seignory is not perfect and complete.
The linden rows, and the old dingy dwelling,
And the shabby little chapel, are not mine;
And, if I wished to stroll, or rest me, yonder,
I should shudder, like the leaves, in a stranger's shades.
'Tis a plague-spot in my eyes! 'tis a thorn in my feet!
Oh, would that I were far away from hence!

LYNCEUS (*as before*).

How that gallant skiff cuts through the sea,
With the fresh evening breeze in her sails!
What rich foreign stores there must be
Packed away in those boxes and bales!

A magnificent shallop, laden with rich and splendid foreign productions from all quarters of the globe.

MEPHISTOPHELES. *The* THREE MIGHTY COMRADES.

Digitized by Google

CHORUS.

Hurra! here we are—
Come fast, and come far.
Hurra! may success
Our lord ever bless!

[*They step from the shallop, and the discharge of her freight commences.*

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Well have our zeal and merits been tried:
If our patron but praises, we're satisfied.
Forth, with only two vessels, went we:
We are returned into port with twenty.
What mighty achievements have we done!
That, by our lading is plainly shown.
The free sea maketh the spirit free:
For land regulations, what care we?
It only requires a bolder grip,
And, as fish are taken, one takes a ship;
Through two, becoming the lords of three,
Our number is quadrupled presently;
Then we start, of a fifth to get sight—
Having power, who dares to dispute the right?
Folks ask not wherefore? or why? but what?—
Of navigation I know nought,
If warfare, and traffic, and piracy
Are not an indivisible three.

Digitized by Google

THE THREE MIGHTY COMRADES.

No thanks! no greeting!
As one might suppose:
As if a stink meeting,
He sniffs up his nose.
He makes ugly faces
At the treasures we've brought.
And onward he paces,
As if it were nought.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

He expects more:
Then, part of the store
To give he engages;
But no present wages.

THE COMRADES.

That's tediousness, that;
We, all three, demand—
And expect, too, that's flat—
Our share, out of hand.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

First: 'tis your duty,
All the rich booty
To range on the floors
Of the vaulted stores;
Then he, pacing through,
At the splendid view

Digitized by Google

Will feel proud and happy.
He won't behave shabby!
Treat after treat
He'll give the whole fleet.—
I'll proclaim, to ye all,
High festival,
When the banner of morn
Shall the orient adorn!

[*The discharging and warehousing of the goods is continued and completed.*

MEPHISTOPHELES (*to Faust*).

With brow contracted, and with darkened glance,
Thou welcom'st the rich spoils laid at thy feet.
Crowned with success is wisdom's mighty plan:
The ocean and the shores are reconciled;
The buoyant waves bear thy swift vessels on,
Cheerfully, over their blue furrowed plains;
One may say, with truth, that, from thy palace, here,
Thy outstretched arm embraceth the wide world.
Upon this spot stood our first wooden shed;
Here, in a shallow scratch along the ground,
Ran a small ditch—and now, proud vessels float;
Thy powerful mind, and thy servant's diligence,
Make earth and ocean thine, even from this spot.

FAUST.

Cursed spot! it oppresses me with loathing.

Digitized by Google

Unto thee, most adroit one, I must say it:
Heart-stab after heart-stab doth it give me;
It is impossible I can endure it;
Yet, as I say it, I'm ashamed of myself;—
The old folks, yonder, should have yielded up
That linden-knoll, for which I was so anxious:
Those few trees, unpossessed, would mar the world's
possession!
Yonder, from bough to bough, would I have fixed
Convenient scaffolding, and opened out
A wide and splendid prospect, all around:
I could have seen, at a glance, all I've accomplished—
Beheld, at once, the human mind's *chef d'œuvre*;
And thence, with more intelligent eye, devised
Plans, to extend the tract won for my people.
Thus, I'm tortured in the most vexatious way.
The amplitude, the grandeur of the whole,
But makes the want—the failure—more enormous:
The sound of that bell, the scent of those linden trees,
Haunt me as if I were entombed amongst them!
The omnipotent will, the prompt obedient deed,
Are broken—wrecked—upon those cursed sands!
Oft, when absorbed amidst my mind's creations,
Dong! goes that bell, and makes me writhe with fury.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Quite natural! some deep disgust or other

Digitized by Google

Must needs embitter life: who may disown
Such a feeling? in every noble ear
It sounds its tocsin, and scares peace away.
Aye! that infernal bim-bom-bimmel clouds,
With unwholesome vapour, its serenest evening,
And blends itself with every event,
From the first bath, to the return to dust—
When life becomes like an expired dream,
Like the silent intervals 'twixt bim and bom.

FAUST.

That resistance—that self-will—embitters
The noblest acquisitions. It must cause one,
At length, through deeper and more furious pain,
To weary of acting conscientiously.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Meantime, must work be at a stand-still, here?
Wilt thou not, still, proceed to drain and colonize?

FAUST.

Haste thee to get, and take to them, forthwith,
The handsome little presents that thou wot'st of—
Which I for that old obstinate pair selected.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

One takes them there, and sets them down, and lo!
Ere one can look about, they're here again.
Force must reconcile them to a better dwelling.

He whistles loudly. THE THREE *enter.*

Digitized by Google

Come, execute the lord's behest!—
At morn, he'll give that naval feast.

THE THREE.

He's used us badly—that old lord—
That's due to us, besides reward.

MEPHISTOPHELES (*ad spectatores*).

What chances here, chanced long ago:
Of Naboth's vineyard you all know.

DEEP NIGHT.

LYNCEUS, *on the watch-tower of the castle,*

(*singing*).

BORN a watchman was I, and
To this tower bound.
On the world, from its high stand,
Well pleased, I look round.

I glance through the night, far;
I gaze on the near;
The moon, and each bright star;
The forest, and deer.

Digitized by Google

I find changeless beauty
In all that I view;
And so, with my duty,
And self, I'm pleased, too.

Eyes! ye were first raised on
Some fair natal star:
For all things, ye've gazed on,
How lovely they are! [*Pause.*

But not for my pleasure, only,
Am I stationed here on high:
Up from earth, so dark and lonely,
Threatening horrors meet my eye!
Sparks are glancing, flames advancing,
Through the lindens' twofold night;
The sea-breeze, blowing, fans the glowing
Flame, more fiercely and more bright!
Now, alas! the cottage blazes.
No salvation is at hand.
Wider, fiercer, the flame rages:
How it brightens all the strand! [*Pause.*

A blackened heap now stands the cottage,
By the red glow girded round.
May the good pair, in their dotage,
Safe beyond that hell be found!

Digitized by Google

Now the flames, the trees ascending,
Play amongst the boughs and leaves,
Scorching, crisping, flaring, blending!
Earth their falling limbs receives.
Must I, on that sad sight gazing,
Fruitlessly, such ruin see?—
Now the little chapel's blazing:
A ruined heap, too, that will be.
Twisting flame-tongues, flame-tongues follow;
Up the tall spire, now, they go!
How the root-fangs, and the hollow
Trunks, now shine with purple glow!

[*Long pause. Song.*

What late, so fair and flourishing, shone,
With all their centuries, are gone!

FAUST,

(*in the balcony, fronting the denes*).

What doleful strains are sounding from the turret!
But all too late, all in vain, is the alarm.
My watchman is lamenting, there, on high;
And I, within, am disgusted at the deed.
Yet, if the linden grove should be destroyed,
And their gray trunks converted into coal,
An artificial mound is soon erected,
To look around upon the boundless view.
Thence shall I, also, the new dwelling see

Digitized by Google

Of yon old couple, fitted and enclosed;
Where their last days may happily be spent;
Where they will own my generous forbearance.

MEPHISTOPHELES *and* THE THREE,
(*below*).

Here we come, full trot!—Your pardon, governor!
It did not go off *quite* as we could wish:
We knocked, and knocked again, repeatedly,
But no answer, no admittance, could we get;
Still, we strammed on, till the old door gave way;
Still bawled, and threatened, but we got no audience;
They did not hear—they did not choose to hear.
But we hesitated not, on thy behalf,
Promptly to make a proper clearance of them.
The ancient couple were not long tormented:
They were terror-struck, and fell, deprived of life.
A stranger—that concealed himself within,
And would have shown fight—he was soon disposed of.
The fiery war then raged: some charcoal heaps,
And lighted straw, soon made a famous blaze—
A splendid funeral pyre, 'twas, for all three!

FAUST.

Ye were as deaf as adders to my words:
I would have made exchange: I would not have spoiled.
The originator of that inconsiderate deed—
Him do I curse!—Portion it 'mongst yourselves.

Digitized by Google

CHORUS.

That word—that ancient word—resounds:
Promptly obey, where power abounds.
And art thou bold? and hast thou pelf?
Then, hazard house, and land, and—self. [*Exit.*

FAUST (*from the balcony*).

The stars, that were concealed, come forth again;
The fire is not so fierce—it sinks, and smoulders;
A shivering night-breeze, fanning, passes by,
Wafting the smoke and vapour to me, here.—
Hasty command! too hastily accomplished!—
What shadowy forms float by?

MIDNIGHT.

Four GRAY WOMEN *enter.*

FIRST.

Hail, Want!

SECOND.

Hail, Guilt!

THIRD.

Hail, Care!

FOURTH.

Danger, hail!

Digitized by Google

THREE OF THEM.

To open these closed gates, our efforts would fail:
'Tis the home of the rich; we can't show our nose there.

WANT.

I remain in the shadow.

GUILT.

There, I may not dare.

DANGER.

The spoilt ones of luxury, my face can't bear.

CARE.

Sisters! within those halls ye may not venture;
But Care, through the key-hole, will stealthily enter.

WANT. [*Care disappears.*

Sisters! gray sisters! from hence let us go.

GUILT.

Where thou art, my fast friend, there I am also.

DANGER.

And, following close upon thy heel, treads—Danger.

THE THREE.

The clouds darken; the stars disappear; from the plain there—
In the gloom, the far distance—hist! hist! hold your breath!
Hither our brother comes: hither comes—Death!

FAUST (*in the palace*).

I saw *four* advancing, and but *three* retire.

Digitized by Google

The drift of their discourse I understand not.
The last name sounded in my ear like—Danger,
And the last gloomy word that followed—Death!
Hollow, ghost-like, and depressing was the sound.
Hitherto, I have not struggled in the Free.
Ah! could I magic from my path remove;
Could I unlearn the spell-words of enchantment!
Then, Nature! I might stand before thee, only
As a man, which then it were worth while to be.
Such was I once, ere I, in darkness, sought
To cure myself, and the world, by evil spell-words.
The air's so full of spectral forms and sounds,
That one knows not how, possibly, to avoid them:
If one clear rational day yet smiles on us,
The night involves us in perplexing dreams;
One comes, rejoicing, from the new plains won:
Lo, a bird croaks: what croaks he of? misfortune.
Early and late, beset by superstition:
It adapts itself, it obtrudes itself, it warns;
And thus, made timid, one stands all alone.—
The door is creaking, and yet no one enters!—
Is any person here? [*Trembles violently.*

CARE.

The reply is, Yes.

FAUST.

And who mayst thou be?

Digitized by Google

CARE.

Even, what I am.

FAUST.

Withdraw thyself.

CARE.

I'm in the proper place.

FAUST,

(*first putting himself in a rage, and then calming down*).

Speak cautiously, and not one word of magic!

CARE.

If the ear should not perceive,
Still, I've power the heart to grieve.
In ever-changing forms I'm dight;
Aye exerting furious might;
An anxious comrade, ever at hand,
On the paths of the ocean, or those on land;
Never sought, and yet found ever;
Thus caressing—how distressing!—
Hast thou known Care, never?

FAUST.

I'm but a passing traveller through the world;
I but seized pleasures by the hair, as I passed;
What did not satisfy, I let slip off;
What escaped, I let draw onward, and excite me;
I have but had to desire and accomplish,
And then desire anew; and thus, with power,

Digitized by Google

My life hath rushed along; first, great and daring;
But now, by sagacity and caution guided.
This earthly sphere unfolds enough for me;
Beyond, the receding prospect mocks our gaze:
Fool! who his blinking eyes directeth thither,
Finds himself wrapped in self-resembling clouds;
Here stands he firmly, and looks round himself;
Responds this earth-ball to the capable;
Why need he ramble in the eternity?
What he perceiveth, let him comprehend;
Thus, through earth's life-time, he might wander here.
Let spirits stir as they may, he pursues his course;
Range wide as he may, he finds delights and pains—
He, every moment, restless and unsatisfied.

CARE.

To those whose bosoms I possess,
All the world is nothingness:
With all outward senses whole,
Night descends upon the soul,
And suns rise and set, in vain:
Constant darkness, there, doth reign.
Pining 'midst his useless store,
With uncounted wealth, he's poor.
Happiness, unhappiness:
These depend on the mind's caprice.
Cometh good, or cometh ill,

Digitized by Google

Either, he deferreth still;
Ne'er enjoying, still preparing,
For the future, only, caring.

FAUST.

Off with your din! intrude not on my presence!
I will not tolerate such nonsense here.
Away! that cursed litany of yours
Is enough to stultify the strongest mind.

CARE.

Shall he go? or shall he come?
Firm resolve's to him unknown.
More intense doth self-love grow.
As they should not, all things go—
Or seem to—which is all the same;
With misgivings, cautions, blame,
Wearying both himself and others.
Still, nought keen perception smothers;
Still, life holds out—tough to bear—
There's no yielding to despair.
Startling half-sleep—comfort's knell—
Ringing in his ears, farewell!
Serve to break him in for hell.

FAUST.

Unhallowed spirit! thus do ye torment
The human race, by a countless swarm of ills!
Even the most common uneventful days,

Digitized by Google

Ye untranquillize, and beset with snares.
From demons, I'm aware, man mayn't be free:
The strong bond of the spirit's indivisible;
But thy power, oh Care! great, subtle, as it is,
It beseemeth not me to recognize.

CARE.

Recognize it, as I glide,
Now, with curses, from thy side!
Through their whole lives blind, are some:
Thou, at the end, Faust, so become.

[*She breathes on him.*

FAUST (*become blind*).

Deep night seems passing to profounder depths;
Whilst brighter shines the spirit's inward light.
What I've conceived, I hasten to accomplish·
'Tis the Lord's command that gives the impulsive force.
Up from your couches, servants, each and all!
Fortunate serfs! to witness what your master
Produces by the power of daring thought.
Forth, now, with spades and shovels, and set to,
The marked-out plan, at once, to execute.
From strict command, and active diligence,
Resulteth the all-glorious achievement.
One mind suffices for ten thousand hands,
The greatest work to accomplish.

Digitized by Google

GREAT FORE-COURT OF THE PALACE.

Torches.

MEPHISTOPHELES *comes forward, in the character of superintendant.*

COME hither, come hither, every one,
Ye lemures! ye waddling creatures!
Come hither, ye jumbles of sinew and bone!
Hither, ye botched half-natures!

LEMURES IN CHORUS.

Here we are, at a wish, by thy side.
We sniffed there was prey in the wind;
The rumour is current, far and wide,
That here a rich prize we should find.

Sharp stakes we have brought, to mark plans out,
And long chains, to measure, as well;
But, what we were summoned here about,
We've forgotten—we cannot tell.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

There needs no skill, there needs no fuss;
Just go by your own measure, thus:
Let the tallest lay along, on the ground,
And let the rest mark the turf out, round.

Digitized by Google

Dig down, deep, in the form I bid;
Do as, for our fathers, we did;
From the palace, to that narrow home,
In the end, 'tis with all as it is with one.

THE LEMURES (*with ridiculous gestures*).

When I was young, I danced and sung
To many a gleesome measure;
I lightly moved, I warmly loved—
And life and love were pleasure.

But now, I must in a crutch put trust—
Of malicious age the token.
I stumble o'er death's open door—
What business hath it open.

FAUST,

(*coming out of the palace, and groping his way by the rails*).

My serfs—employed on their accustomed task-work!
How I enjoy the clirring of those spades!
Not only do they reconcile and blend
The earth-clods with each other, but they set
A boundary to the encroaching sea,
And say to it, Here be thy proud waves stayed.

MEPHISTOPHELES (*at his side*).

Thou art but taking pains for us, I tell thee,
With thy dams, and scaffoldings: thou 'rt, soon, to ride
To the water-devil, Neptune's, great sea-feast:

Digitized by Google

In every way, thou'rt done for: the elements
Assist our efforts, and are rushing on
To destruction.

FAUST.

Overseer!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Here!

FAUST.

How can such a thing as that be possible?
Procure, forthwith, a multitude of workmen,
And urge them, both by profit and severity;
Entice them, pay them, hearten them, compel them.
Of the progress, daily bring me an account.—
How I long to have that last-planned trench accomplished!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Ye speak, as if account to me ye gave,
Not of sea-trenches, but—the trenched grave.

FAUST.

Along the mountain's base, a marshy swamp
Extends, and spreads its pestilential vapours,
Marring all that hath been won: this to drain off,
Will be the crowning act. Then, have I conquered
A home for millions—free, if not secure.
Green fertile plains, flocks, herds, and busy man,
At the sea-mound's base, amidst abundance, hived

Digitized by Google

On the virgin soil. Within, a paradise;
Without, the restless waves, to the very brim
Of their repelling barrier, boiling up—
For ever chafing, gnawing, to get entrance;
To rush in, and regain their lost dominion;
Whilst zealous freemen throng to repair the breaches.
Yes, heart and soul is centred in this wish,
This last resolve of wisdom. He, alone,
Is worthy life and freedom, who is, daily,
Compelled to conquer for himself those blessings.
Thus, on this noble soil, hemmed round by danger,
Free throngs—through childhood, manhood, and old age—
May bring their well-spent periods to a close.
Fain would I see such active multitudes!
Fain stand, 'midst freemen, upon freedom's strand!
Then, indeed, might I to that moment say,
"Tarry, oh, tarry! for thou art so fair."—
The traces of my first, my earthly days,
Cannot be lost amidst receding ages.—
In the presentiment of such high bliss,
I now enjoy the most exalted moment.

[*Faust falls backward; the Lemures take him up, and stretch him out on the ground.*

MEPHISTOPHELES.

No pleasure pleases him, and no enjoyment

Digitized by Google

Gives him continuous joy. Thus is he, ever,
In hot pursuit of ever-changing phantoms.
The last, the worst, the very emptiest moment,
The poor unsatisfied one would fain hold fast!
He, who so vigorously withstood my efforts,
Is subdued: TIME has obtained the mastery.
Here lies the gray-beard!—Now the clock stands still.

CHORUS.

Stands still! silent as midnight stands!
Down, fall the index-hands.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

He falls: it is accomplished.

CHORUS.

It is finished.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Finished! that is a stupid word: why finished?
Finished, and perfect nothingness, are identical.
What prompts us, then, to be eternally doing,
If what is done is huddled off to nothingness?
"Lo, it is finished!" What from that can be gathered?
To have not existed had been just as well,
Since the same vortex sweeps one in again.
Therefore do I prefer the eternal void.

Digitized by Google

THE INTERMENT.

LEMURE (*solo*).

Who hath built that house, so narrow and mean,
With shovel and with spade, O?

LEMURES (*chorus*).

To thee, hollow guest, it is suited, I ween,
In the winding-sheet to be laid, O!

LEMURE (*solo*).

Who has fitted out that room, so mean?
Chair or table, there's not any.

LEMURES (*chorus*).

The time was so short to prepare it in:
The faithful, they are so many.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

There the body rests: when forth the spirit flies,
I'll produce my blood-signed title to the prize.
And yet, alas! man, in so many ways,
Doth cheat the Devil in these latter days!
Out of the old paths, into new, they wend—
A plan that we by no means recommend,
That to our advantage doth in no way tend:
I could have managed it myself, of old;
Now, I want helpers from my chieftain's fold.

Digitized by Google

But every thing, with us, is going wrong:
In ancient laws and customs, howe'er long
Established, no reliance can be placed
As formerly, when, with the last breath, passed
The spirit forth. Then, couching, on the watch—
Snap! I was sure the swiftest mouse to catch
In my strong unsheathing claws, with cat-like spring;
Now, they'll not leave their dark holes, but within
The vile disgusting corse, cleave still to earth,
Till the element, that loathes, insultingly drives them
forth.
And suppose I'm daily, hourly, on the fret:
WHEN? HOW? and WHERE? is the hateful question,
yet;
Death's in his dotage—is not near so strong,
So swift, as in the days when he was young.
Eager, and oft, I gaze on the rigid limbs!—
Was it fancy—that stir?—again?—'t is not mere whims.

[*A phantasmic winged swarm of exorcised beings.*]

Advance! quick, quicker still! your strides redouble,
Ye lords of the grave—lords of the crooked horns!—
Ye who derive your origin, so noble,
From old parings of the Devil's hoofs and corns—
And let me see, forthwith, the jaws of hell
Open beside ye—*which pair*, ye know well:

Digitized by Google

For hath not hell many and many a throat,
Sinners—according to their rank and note—
To devour? Man, by this last act of mine,
Will doubt less of the future, I opine.

[*The horrible jaws of hell open themselves, on the left.*]

Sharp fangs gnash—open wide! from the dark vault,
Streams of fire gush, impatient to assault!
And in the distance, through the boiling steam,
I see the eternal glow of the city of flame:
I see the damned—those who of hope yet dream—
Against the fiery desolation strain;
Breasting the red waves dashing in their teeth!
Whilst meet the huge hyena jaws, to crush
Them, ever and anon; when back they rush,
Plunging headlong down their hot bath, for relief!
What unseen nooks of misery, there, one might trace!
How many scared things, crowded in the narrowest
space!
Well, from their ways, might ye sinners terrify!
Yet they still persist, and think—'tis all my eye.

[*To the squabby devils of the short-horned kind.*]

Now, belly-grubs—so bloated, and so sleek!
Ye graceful lumps—so flabby and so squat—
With short immoveable neck, and fiery cheek,

Digitized by Google

All shiny with hell's yellow sulphur fat! [phor—
Below there, watch ye—where it gleams like phos-
Down with ye there; and may your doings prosper.
That's a dear little soul—that's my winged Psyche!
What pick ye out, there, that doth so delight ye?
An ugly worm! I'll stamp it with my seal.
There! in with't, where the fiery whirlpools reel.
But down with ye, down with ye, my paunchy beauties,
To the lower region, and perform your duties!
Be constantly on your guard! one's not aware,
Exactly, of the how, the when, or where;
But let it not escape into the air.

[*To the meagre devils, with the long crooked horns.*]

Ye phantom leaders, ye phantasmic giants
Watch ceaselessly: on you I place reliance.
With long gaunt arms, and short claws, stretching forth,
Seize the fluttering fugitive, as it soars from earth!
Safe, in the old house that ye relish so,
Is that genius *now*; but off, like a flash, it may go.

[*Glory from above, on the right.*]

A PORTION OF THE HEAVENLY HOST.

Gliding, serene, through air,
Heavenly friends
Follow Heaven's messenger,

Digitized by Google

Who to earth wends,
The sinner to pardon—
To animate dust:
Love's noble guerdon
For unwavering trust.
Whencesoever it glides,
Remains a clear track,
To what, there, abides,
Its way to wing back;
And, with brooding wings, hover,
The lost to recover.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

What deceitful sound—what hateful jingling's there?
From on high it comes, 'midst a most offensive glare.
Ah! those mischievous wenches, with their maiden airs!
I hate their affectation, and their prayers,
Ye know how, by lessons deeply profligate,
We sought the human race to annihilate:
What was infamy, according to our notion,
Doth even constitute their true devotion.
The hypocritical triflers! there they come:
Already, many a one they've snapped away—
Making war on us, with weapons of our own:
'Tis nought but devilry masked in fair array.
Up! defend this grave! stand firmly round its brink!
If beaten now, your names will for ever stink.

Digitized by Google

CHORUS OF ANGELS (*strewing roses*).

Blinding, with roses,
Their sensual eyes;
Filling their noses
With balm from the skies;
Branches we shower,
Whose sealed buds, full soon,
Burst into flower.
Dispelling the gloom,
Love's brooding wings hover;
It pierces the tomb,
By its own vital power,
The soul to illume.

Fair Spring, come forth
In thy loveliest guise!
The reposing in earth,
We bear off to the skies.

MEPHISTOPHELES (*to the satanic host*).

What do ye duck and dodge so for, I say?
Phantoms! stand firm, and let them pelt away.
Each to his station! never mind their showers:
They think to snow the Devil in with flowers;
But they will, at your breathing, shrink and shrivel.
Blow away! squirt away! shout, Death and the Devil!
We'll soon drive off the wretches who oppose us.

Digitized by Google

Not so vehement! contract your mouths and noses:
Ye are over-violent! too hard ye blow;
The proper point to hit ye never know;
That, not only shrivels, but it scathes and burns;
Already to bright poisonous flame it turns!
Smother it—stamp upon it—put it out!
It annihilates strength—puts courage to the rout;
It girds, with strange witching glow, the Devil about.

ANGELS.

Fragrant showers
Of holy flowers,
Joy bestowing:
Pure flames glowing
With prelusive
Love, diffusive:
Round him closing,
Grasps the reposing.
'Midst ether bright,
To show the might
Of the Word Eternal
To the supernal.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

The clumsy wretches! not to keep their feet!
Now, back to hell, stern foremost, they retreat.
Deep curses on ye—shameless renegades!—
In the Satanic jaws to hide your heads!

Digitized by Google

With a hot bath ye merit to be blest.
But I'll stand firm, though deserted by the rest.
[*Fighting with the roses floating about him.*
Thou Will-o'-the-wisp—and thou—and thou—come on!
You're nought, when seized—although your light's so strong—
But filthy squash. What! fluttering to escape?—
Zounds! it sticks, like pitch and brimstone, in the nape
Of my neck, and bites, and burns!—I'm in an awkward scrape.

CHORUS OF ANGELS.

What doth inwardly glow,
Ye must forgo:
Ye may not dare
Touch the spirit that's there.
Striveth a mighty one:
We must be strong.
Therein to glide—
Thither to guide—
The loving, alone,
Through love, may presume.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

It burns my head—it burns my heart—my liver!
A far more devilish element, than ever,
Hell-fire is formed of—sharper, I assever.—

Digitized by Google

About this loved one, ye feel monstrous anguish!
How ye stretch your necks to explore! how ye pine
and languish!
Must I, too, twist my neck, against my will,
To gaze? Am I at sworn strife with thee, still?
Too oft, before, I've braved that hated glance,
Trying to stare me out of countenance.
How is it that I dare not curse? Confusion!
If I give way—if I yield to such delusion—
I wonder who the fool will, in future, be?—
Those cloud-boys, too, that I hate so cordially,
They, with their mawkish rosy looks, must dare one!
And impudently, thus, try to outstare one.
Fair children! that descend in beauty, here,
Are ye not of the tribe of Lucifer?
Ye look so lovely, that I long to kiss
Your fragrant lips! ye came to me, I wis!
Ye seem so kind, so natural, that I'm sure
I must have seen ye scores of times before.
To spring on ye, as playful kittens do,
I long: at every glance, I see some new
Beauty.—Indulge me with a nearer view.

ANGELS.

We did approach thee: why didst thou give way?
We approach still closer—if thou darest, stay!

[*The angels gather round, and occupy the whole space.*

Digitized by Google

MEPHISTOPHELES,

(*who is squeezed out into the proscenium*).

We spirits that are damned, ye must needs abuse,
Though ye are the true sorcerers:—what the deuce!
Do ye not men and women, both, seduce?—
A damnable adventure, this doth prove!
Is this, in sooth, the element of love?
I feel as if on fire in every part;
Of my neck, now, I scarcely feel the smart.—
Ye glide about: stoop the least bit more, I pray,
And use your graceful limbs in the earthly way.
Truly, that seriousness becomes you well;
But it would please me, more than I can tell,
If I could see ye smile: ah! that would be
An everlasting pleasure unto me.
With ogling glance, I screw my mouth up—so:
And blow a kiss t'ye—that's the way, you know.
What! you still yearn, then, for your ancient lover?
That saintly garb doth, still, desires cover?
Why are you not more thinly clad, my dear?
Those folding robes too prudish, far, appear.—
She stoops! she fain a nearer glance would get!
The mortal rogue! he's even too tempting, yet.

CHORUS OF ANGELS.

Mount, spirits of love,
To the brightness above!

Digitized by Google

Each contrite soul,
Whom the truth hath made whole,
From sin's foul union
Redeemed and set free,
In the communion
Of angels to be.

MEPHISTOPHELES (*recovering himself*).

But what has chanced me? bruised all o'er—Job's fare!—
All one could do, of one's self to take due care.
He would have triumphed, could he have looked through,
And relied on himself, and what kindred spirits could do.
Preserved, however, is the Devil's share:
That love-stir, from within, himself shakes clear.
The villanous flames, already, are burnt out.
And now, I curse ye all—vile rabble-rout!

CHORUS OF ANGELS.

Holiest fire-glow!
Whom thou surroundest, know
The life, pure and high,
That the blessed enjoy.
Now, upward soaring,
Praises forth pouring,
Mount, from beneath,
To where pure spirits breathe!

Digitized by Google

MEPHISTOPHELES (*looking round*).

But how—but how's this? whither are they gone?
Young as you are, you've o'er-reached me.—They are
flown,
Heavenward, with the prize! For this they have,
With their vile arts, been prowling round this grave.
The exalted soul, of worth beyond all measure—
A mighty, an inestimable treasure!
That had pledged itself to me, by a solemn vow—
Is wrested from me.—To whom shall I, now,
Of this enormous trickery complain?
My right, so fairly earned, who will regain?—
But I deserve it, for my want of sense:
To be choused, with my years and experience!
Fearfully ill, are matters turning out!
Shamefully I've mismanaged, there's no doubt.
What an outlay squandered! to be called a drivel!
To be laughed at, as a poor outwitted devil! [thee!
Commonplace desires—love-sick qualms—come o'er
Mayst thou be the bugbear of a grandame's story!—
And if old Satan—with the stock of sense
Derivable from long experience—
Hath also had a finger in this pie,
This childish o'erturned dish of cookery, why,
In sooth, the share of folly and of blame
Is not small, that, at the close, cleaves to *his* name.

Digitized by Google

MOUNTAIN VALES, WOODS, ROCKS, DESERT.

HOLY ANCHORITES, *in mountain-dwellings dispersed at random amongst the ravines.*

CHORUS AND ECHO.

FORESTS spread around:
With a surge-like sound,
Hosts of giants, there,
Waving their green hair,
'Midst the steadfast rocks—
Scorning the tempest's shocks,
Braving the wildest blast—
Moor securely fast;
Torrents, through the pines,
Down the torn ravines,
In foam and thunder, go
To caverned depths below.
Peacefully, and dumb,
Friendly lions come
To this hallowed place,
Haunt of heavenly grace.

PATER ECSTATICUS (*gliding up and down*).

Torch of bliss eternal,
Divine love's glowing cest',

Digitized by Google

Desires and pains supernal
Boiling in my breast;
Wounds me many an arrow,
Knotted clubs subdue me,
Lances pierce my marrow,
Lightning flashes through me;
Essence of love divine,
Star of pity, shine!
That vain glory may
Wholly melt away.

PATER PROFUNDUS,

(*in the abysses*).

How, 'neath my feet, each rocky precipice
Its weight reposes on the deep abyss!
How the myriad water-brooks, rejoicing, go
To feed the whirlpool's boiling gulf below!
How trees uprear their giant stems on high,
And spread, with instinctive power, their leafy drapery!
All have their sources in Almighty Love,
That forms, that cherishes all, around, aneath, above.
Tremble the rocks, and fluctuate the woods;
And tumble, headlong down, the boiling floods;
And flash red lightnings through the lurid air;
And kindle meteors, with portentous glare:
Yet, still, the wildest tumult breathes of love.—
See, robed in purer blue, the heavens above;

Digitized by Google

List, how the waterfalls call to the deeps below,
Bidding them, through the vales, rejoicing flow,
And spread fertility, as on they go;
See fresher verdure, brighter flowers, surround
The glittering rocks; see trees more proudly crowned;
And list, through the forest's aisles, glad melody resound.
So, the whirlwind passions, that man's bosom tear,
Are messengers of love, that show more clear
The need he has, through every changing hour,
Of the aid and guidance of supernal power.
Oh, may my breast become a hallowed shrine,
For holy love to kindle fires divine!
When the spirit, proud and cold, itself condenses
Within the narrow boundary of the senses,
What demons over it assume control!
Almighty! purify my thoughts, illume my needy soul!

PATER SERAPHICUS (*middle region*).

Behold, through the pine-boughs' waving hair,
Onward, a morning-cloud glideth!
Instinct with life is that vapoury car;
Therein, a young spirit-band rideth.

CHORUS OF BLESSED BOYS.

Teach us, holy one, what we be;
Instruct us, Father, whither we go.
Happy—serenely happy—see
All of us—all of us—gliding so!

Digitized by Google

PATER SERAPHICUS.

Earth's midnight clouds, that o'er it close,
The mortal spirit, at times, may sever:
You are, whom parents have but welcomed to lose;
Whom the heavenly host will enrol for ever.

Ye came as presents to mortal love,
Therefore yours seemed an errand of joy;
But 'tis not your fate this bleak earth to rove:
Happy ones! ye have but hailed it, and fly.

Nearer approach! for my earth-obscured sight
Scarce can define ye, in regions so rare:
Like your pure sense, unembodied and bright,
Should mine be, to view ye, high floating, there.
[*He draws them to him.*
This is a forest of mountain pines;
These, rugged rocks; that, a torrent, dashing
Down, the shortest way, through their ravines,
To its deep caverned bed, thundering and splashing.

BLESSED BOYS (*from within the cloud*).

It is a mighty scene to behold!
But gloomy and cheerless: the pain
And terror it causes us, cannot be told.
Father! we would float onward, again.

PATER SERAPHICUS.

Mount, till ye fade from my aching sight!
Ascend, ascend, to the brightness above!

Digitized by Google

Where strengthened are all by supernal might;
Where girded are all by eternal love.

'Tis the presence of God that the blessed sustains:
Of other sustenance they've no need.
'Tis exhaustless love, on ethereal plains
Revealed, that maketh them happy, indeed.

CHORUS OF BLESSED BOYS,
(*circling round the highest peak*).

Hand in hand,
Our happy band,
Circling, rise
Amidst the skies,
Blent in holiest sympathies,
Divinely taught,
By love unsought:
We sing faith's might
To guide, aright,
Unto where
All is clear
That we, now, revere.

ANGEL, *floating in the higher air, and bearing the immortal part of* FAUST.

This noble link of the spirit world
From the Evil One is saved:

Digitized by Google

We bear him, with joyous wings unfurled,
From the struggle he plunged in, and braved.

Verily, to the rescue, Love
Hath stooped from on high, with redeeming might!
There will be joy in the hosts above:
They will welcome him with delight.

THE YOUNGER ANGEL.

A penitent, fair, and loving band,
With fragrant rosebuds in their hand,
Helped us to make the victory sure;
Aided, the priceless pearl to secure.
Evil retreated as on we sped;
At our touch, the Evil One fled;
Even ancient Satan, the demon chief,
Felt the piercing shafts of grief.
Shout! the immortal spirit is free:
Shout! we have triumphed gloriously.

THE PERFECTED ANGEL.

Earthly fragments rest,
Still, in this asbest',
With toil, to bear
To the bright realms, where
All is purity and joy.
The spirit, strengthened there,
Will cast off its alloy.

Digitized by Google

Angels may not separate
This strange twofold state:
Only Eternal Love
May the bonds remove.

THE YOUNGER ANGEL.

The earth-born mists, that gird
This Alpine peak, are stirred:
Spirit-life is at hand:
Lo, the welkin clears,
And, therein, appears
A joyous youthful band!
In spiral circles frolicking,
Upward, joyously, they spring
From the gloomy scenes of earth,
To a new and happier birth,
'Midst the beauty and the glow
That ethereal regions know.
May these infant voyagers,
Through higher and yet higher spheres,
Reach the footsteps of the throne
Where sitteth the Eternal One!

BLESSED BOYS.

We are young chrysalides,
Whom Eternal Love decrees
To burst their coverings, and ascend
Where the songs of seraphs blend.

Digitized by Google

DOCTOR MARIANUS (*in the highest and neatest cell*).

Lo, an unobstructed view!
On these depths of ether blue,
Gazing, the rapt spirit springs
Far away from earthly things.—
Lo! bright female forms appear,
Floating in the upper sphere,
Beckoning spirits on, from hence!—
Lo, the far-off heavens unfold!
Arrayed in dread magnificence,
Their virgin queen, behold!
On her head a starry crown.
Lowly, all bow down!
[*Enraptured.*]
Empress of earth and heaven!
Amidst this spirit-element,
Aneath this skiey tent,
Woven of ether blue,
To me, be given,
Thy mysteries to view!
If earnest thoughts, if tender, move
My breast, do thou approve!
With more intense desire,
Do thou my bosom fire,
To draw still nearer thee,
Resplendent mystery!

Digitized by Google

Thou commandest: like a lion, man goes forth
Invincible, and shakes the trembling earth;
Thou soothest: and the passions sink to rest,
Calm as an infant on its mother's breast.
Virgin, without spot or sin!
Mother, beyond all mothers blest!
Our elected Queen!
Light amber clouds float round thee;
Fair penitents are, there,
Bending, with awe, profoundly,
Breathing an earnest prayer.
Is it not revealed,
That the easily-beguiled,
The trusting and the free,
Who err from too quick sympathy,
Should come to thee, the undefiled,
And their sorrows will be healed?
Are they so hard to save,
Whom Desire, with strong chain, drags astray?
On the smooth slope of joy,
Whose feet may not slip, suddenly?
Whom, may passions not enslave?
Whom, may not a kiss betray?
Or love-beaming eyes?
Or perfumed flatteries?

Digitized by Google

MATER GLORIOSA, *floating onward.*

CHORUS OF PENITENTS.

Thou, who floatest on high,
'Midst the realms of eternity!
Thou, who hearest the sinner's cry!
Thou, who, of all, takest place!
Thou, the Fountain of Grace!

MAGNA PECCATRIX. (*St. Luke*, c. 7, v. 36.)

By the love, which bathed the feet
Of thy god-born son with tears;
By the box, whose perfume sweet
Was poured 'midst Pharisaic sneers;
By the golden flowing hair
That his sacred members dried;—

MULIER SAMARITANA. (*St. John*, c. 4.)

By the patriarch's fountain, where
The Saviour, standing by my side,
To the cup, I brought him there,
His hallowed lips applied;
By the purer fount, that flows
From himself, all worlds around;—

MARIA ÆGYPTIACA. (*Acta Sanctorum.*)

By those places of repose,
Where the Lord of men lay down;

Digitized by Google

By the arm, that, from the door
Warning, staid my votive haste;
By the forty years, I wore,
In penance, 'midst the desert waste;
By the adieu—that penance o'er—
Upon its sands, I traced;—

THE THREE.

The greatest sinners, purified
By the atoning essence,
Access never are denied
To thy all-gracious presence:
From this good soul—that but forgot
Himself for a brief space—
Do thou the unconscious error blot:
Grant him thy pardoning grace!

UNA PENITENTIUM,

(*formerly named Gretchen, joining in the supplication*).

Thou, ray divine!
Incline, incline
Thy gracious ear!
Oh thou, without compeer!
May thy countenance, on my bliss, still shine!
My beloved one—
First and alone—
His sorrows gone,
Would fain Heaven's bright hosts join.

Digitized by Google

BLESSED BOYS,

(*approaching in spiral circles*).

He outstrips us already:
He's a mightier one.
True conduct, and steady,
Rich reward will bring on.
From life's chorus, early
Ourselves we withdrew;
But he has learnt clearly—
He'll teach us, too.

THE PENITENT,

(*erst named Gretchen*).

How new, how strange, all here must prove!
He'll scarcely recognize his love,
Standing the angelic hosts among,
The youngest of the spirit throng.—
Mortality's old veil's torn from his eyes!
Each earthly band—away it flies!
Lo! he assumes a spirit's guise!
He steps forth, in ethereal array,
With new-born powers! but this brighter day
Doth dazzle him as yet.—Oh, that it may
Be mine to instruct him, earnestly I pray!

MATER GLORIOSA.

Ascend with me
To the higher sphere;

Digitized by Google

When he sees thee,
He'll follow us there.

DOCTOR MARIANUS (*adoring the Presence*).

Look up to the saving glance
Of that radiant countenance:
All that her blissful destiny praise;
All that, to bliss, themselves would raise;
All repentant hearts; and pray
That, with more instructed sense, ye may
To her your adoration pay.
Virgin! Mother! Queen of Heaven!
Still, to us, be thy mercy shown, thy favour given!

CHORUS MYSTICUS.

What passeth away
Is but similitude;
Abortive essay,
Here, as Event, is viewed;
Here, mysteries shine
In achievement's clear guise;
The Ever-Feminine
Wills that we rise.

THE END.

Digitized by Google

LONDON:
PRINTED BY ARTHUR TAYLOR,
COLEMAN STREET.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google


Digitized by Google

